

A FORMATIVE EVALUATION OF THE TEXAS TEACHER LICENSURE SYSTEM

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Abstract

The focus of this applied research project is on teacher licensure systems. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to describe the ideal characteristics of an effective teacher licensure system. Secondly, this paper assesses the teacher licensure system in Texas using the practical ideal categories established within the conceptual framework. Finally, by using this research design, recommendations for improving the Texas teacher licensure system are made.

The research purpose is prescriptive. A case study methodology incorporating document analysis and focused interviews served to achieve the purpose of the research study. Texas state laws and State Board for Educator Certification rules are analyzed. In addition, focused interviews with university and agency personnel are used to corroborate the document analysis.

The key findings in this study suggest that the Texas teacher licensure system needs vast improvement in the areas of pre-service education, the internship, the provisional licensing examination, the induction period, and the renewal process. Recommendations for improvement are made to the state legislature as well as the State Board for Educator Certification.

Key Findings

Ideal Type Category	Grade	Abbreviated Summary of Recommendations
Pre-service Education	B+	State legislature and the SBEC should require liberal arts degrees.
Internship	C	The state should create professional development schools and mandate cohort groups and professional discourse communities.
Provisional Licensing Examination	C	The state should create a two-tiered system of licensure to include a provisional license.
Induction Period	D	The SBEC should expand and monitor the TxBESS program statewide.
Renewal Process	F	The SBEC should make teacher improvement and student performance the main criteria for renewal.

Chapter 1

Introduction

The way that teachers are trained, the way that schools are organized, the way that the educational hierarchy operates, and the way that education is treated by political decision-making results in a system that is more likely to retain the status quo than to change (Fullan, 1993: 3).

In *Change Forces: Probing the Depths of Educational Reform* (1993: 5), Michael Fullan argues that the work teachers do today in the classroom is far more complex than it has ever been. “They must respond to the needs of a diverse and changing student population, a rapidly changing technology in the workplace, and demands for excellence from all segments of society.” The new mission in education today requires educators to have more knowledge and skills to meet the demands of society (Darling-Hammond, et al., 1995: 2). So what is teacher education not offering teachers what students need them to know in this complex world?

From pre-service to inservice and throughout a teacher’s career, “teacher education... is not geared towards continuous learning” (Fullan, 1993: 108). Failed leadership at the legislative and agency levels has led to the inherent belief that teaching is not that difficult (p. 5). Because investing in teacher education is a long-term strategy, education reforms are not completely thought out by policy-makers who are looking for a “quick-fix” (p. 104).

For this reason, teachers become the change agents that others are not willing to be. “The moral purpose of the teacher is the building block for change” (Fullan, 1995: 254). To

make the necessary changes, teachers engage themselves in continuous learning.¹ The concept of lifelong learning through effective teacher preparation programs and quality professional development is at the heart of the recent changes in education reform. Thomas Guskey (1997: 39) takes the concept of continuous learning and links teacher growth and student success to individual and organizational change. He further suggests that schools must have a grand vision, or a global view that leads to overall improvement (p. 39).

Ball and Cohen (1999: 20) believe there are three essential components necessary to improve teacher professional development: job embedded learning, practice-based professional development, and the exploration of alternative curricula. The curriculum for professional learning then is grounded “in the tasks, questions, and problems of practice” (Ball & Cohen, 1999: 20). If professional learning is the trim tab that moves education forward, it is safe to say that teacher licensure systems are the catalyst for school improvement and higher student performance (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1999: 378).

In a 1999 article for *Teaching PreK-8*, then Secretary of Education Richard Riley wrote that a three-tiered system is necessary for designing rigorous systems for teachers to be licensed. In the article, he describes the need for an **Initial License** provided to prospective teachers that pass “a written exam on content and teaching knowledge and an assessment of teaching performance” (Riley, 1999: 6). Following the initial period, Riley suggests that a **Professional License** “based on clear state-developed standards, that reflect what an effective classroom teacher should know and be able to do,” should be offered (p. 6). The third part of Secretary Riley’s proposal involves an **Advanced License** similar to that offered

¹ “The key to enacting moral purpose is continuous learning, which is another way of saying that continuous professional development is essential” (Fullan, 1995: 254).

by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. This three-tiered system, according to Riley, attempts to provide educators with the necessary support to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to meet the demands of a “first-class profession” in the new century (Riley, 1999: 6).

Research Purpose

The purpose of this research is threefold. First, the purpose is to describe the ideal characteristics of an effective teacher licensure system. This first purpose is achieved by reviewing the latest literature on teacher licensure and developing a conceptual framework supported by the literature. Secondly, this paper assesses the teacher licensure system in Texas using the practical ideal categories established within the conceptual framework. The case study methodology is used in this research to collect evidence in order to determine whether the Texas teacher licensure system adheres to the ideal type. Finally, by using this design, recommendations for improving the Texas teacher licensure system are made.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 2 contains a review of the current literature on teacher licensure systems. This chapter provides the purpose for creating licensure systems and forms the basis for conducting the research. After describing the ideal characteristics of a teacher licensure system, the conceptual framework for the research is developed. Chapter 3 establishes a reference point from which the Texas teacher licensure system can be examined by providing a brief description of the current system. Chapter 4 discusses the methodology that is used for conducting the research, and describes the operationalization of the practical ideal type

categories established in the conceptual framework. Chapter 5 presents a summary of the research results. Chapter 6 summarizes and concludes the research study by offering recommendations to the Texas legislature and the State Board for Educator Certification for improving the teacher licensure system.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to review the current literature on teacher licensure systems. Specifically, the chapter describes the essential components of an ideal teacher licensure system and develops a conceptual framework to assess the current licensing system for Texas teachers. In addition, the structure of state licensure systems is examined through the perspective of the current teacher quality movement² as well as a historical and current perspective.

Introduction: The Teacher Quality Movement

The focus on teacher standards and teacher quality follows on the heels of the focus on student achievement (or lack thereof) that arose as a result of the findings of such national and international assessments as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). The concern over student achievement brought the issue of teacher quality front and center as policy makers grappled with the relatively low scores of American students on international tests and with low scores on the NAEP tests across the nation (Wise & Leibbrand, 2000: 614).

The teacher quality movement underscores the plight of education at the dawn of a new century. Michael Eraut finds it especially problematic. “Logically, it should relate to the standards by which teachers judge one another’s work, so that it becomes both an accolade for good or outstanding performance and an aspiration that stimulates the professional conscience” (1995: 228). Others also note the various problems with teacher quality. Variability in standards for teacher candidates, standards for programs, and teacher

education curriculum and faculty are major sources of this dilemma (Ball & Darling-Hammond, 1998: 12).

At the core of every classroom is the teacher's knowledge and expertise. Successful students are linked to teachers who know a lot about teaching and learning (Darling-Hammond, 1998: 1). The old models of teaching that stand in the way of school improvement illustrate a much different approach. In that paradigm, teachers were the givers of information and students were the receptacles. If the students did not learn, it was not the teacher's fault. Conversely, the teacher quality movement attempts to link teacher expertise to student achievement; and thus, teacher learning is the center of radical change in today's schools (Fullan, 1995: 261).

Darling-Hammond, et al., (1995: 15) advocate the creation of licensing systems³ that are based on teacher performance. Teachers who advance through a performance-based licensure system are prepared in programs that include year-long internships in professional development schools. States with this kind of system provide new teachers with mentors that support and assess the teaching skills of the new teacher. It is through this performance-based licensure system that job-embedded learning⁴ is introduced (Ball & Darling-Hammond, 1998: p. 13). Job-embedded learning is a term that refers to "on-the-job training," or seeking to learn from the solutions of everyday problems. "It is through experience, reflection, analysis, and sharing and discussing that job-embedded learning

² Fullan (1995: 261) finds that it is this notion of continuous learning that is at the heart of teacher quality and therefore, student success.

³ It is essential to distinguish between the definitions of licensing and certification. Licensing is defined as "a state function that seeks to ensure that practitioners allowed to practice in the state meet minimum standards of competence." Certification is defined as "a professional function that generally indicates higher standards of accomplishment as determined by a national professional body" (Darling-Hammond, et al., 1995: 11).

⁴ Job-embedded learning encompasses such professional development models as study groups, action research, mentoring, and coaching (Wood & McQuarrie, 1999: 10).

becomes useful to the individual learner, and thus available to a school staff for improving the current practice” (Wood & McQuarrie, 1999: 13).

Before moving into the essential components of an ideal teacher licensure system, it is necessary to examine past and current state licensure systems. Because teacher licensing is a state function, the components of licensure systems vary greatly from state to state (Brewer & Goldhaber, 1999: 84).

A History of Teacher Licensure Systems

The story behind teacher licensure systems can be summarized in one word: control. Both governments and the education establishment have vied for control over how teachers are prepared and licensed. In the late nineteenth century, a movement began by several states that required state officials to be responsible for issuing teaching licenses (Angus, 2001: 8). Until that time, either teachers were not officially licensed or local school districts were conducting their own versions of teacher licensure. According to Angus (2001), it is important to note that at the time there were two types of patterns for teacher licensure: rural and urban. Rural teachers were mostly high school educated through normal courses, while urban teachers were attending colleges specifically for teaching, known as normal colleges (p. 8).

Teacher preparation in the late nineteenth century was provided mostly by teachers institutes and normal colleges (Angus, 2001: 11). Teachers were tested in language arts, geography, history, and arithmetic (p.12). It was not until 1867 that colleges began to require teachers to receive training in “professional knowledge, the theory and practice of teaching” (p. 12).

When normal schools began in the 1800s, teachers knew little more than their students. American society did not require a highly educated work force. Instead, it required large numbers of people with basic skills, and the schools satisfied this need (Wise & Leibbrand, 2000: 613).

State control of teacher licensure grew rapidly in the early part of the twentieth century. This period in teacher preparation and licensure also saw the transformation of normal schools to teachers colleges (Angus, 2001: 15). The rise of the administrative progressives, or the educational trust⁵, contributed to the success of professional educators during this time of reform (p. 16.) “Members of the educational trust successfully used state law to impose a hierarchical, bureaucratic organizational model of education on the nation’s public schools” (p. 21).

Arguably, teacher unions had a great impact on teacher licensure systems throughout the twentieth century. One approach espoused by the teacher unions that took hold across the country was the “approved program” approach, which gave teacher training institutes the latitude to create the details of preparation once they were approved by the state to prepare teachers (Angus, 2001: 23).

By mid-century, “the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) was born as an independent entity” (Wise & Leibbrand, 2000: 615). This group spent the latter half of the twentieth century focused on the quality of the curriculum being given to teacher candidates in universities and colleges (p. 615).

Perhaps the most important piece of literature to come out of the twentieth century is *A Nation at Risk*, published in 1983 and the purveyor of the standards movement (Wise & Leibbrand, 2000: 616). This U. S. government report argued that the U. S. population was

⁵ “By the turn of the twentieth century, leadership in American public education had gravitated from the part-time educational evangelists who had created the common-school system to a new breed of professional

not educated enough to compete in the global marketplace. “While many of the broad accusations of that report have since been proven false, the perception of schools in crisis remains” (Senge, et al., 2000: 9). Nevertheless, the solution at the time was “large-scale governmental action” (Fullan, 1993: 2). The next section of this chapter focuses on state licensure systems that evolved since the publication of *A Nation at Risk*.

State Licensure Systems Today

Teacher licensure systems, like those for medicine and law, are adopted for one basic reason: to protect the public from incompetent practitioners (Wise, 2000: 21). In education, for example, legislative bodies rely on licensure as a tool to gain public confidence when student achievement is down (Ballou & Podgursky, 1999: 32). Not everyone agrees that licensing alone will improve student achievement. Ballou and Podgursky suggest that licensure systems demonstrate evidence of minimal competence; and therefore, do not go far enough (1999: 35). In addition, they also propose that individuals will turn away from licensing when requirements become more stringent. Brewer and Goldhaber (1999: 96) acknowledge that licensure may improve teaching and learning, but at an enormous cost to the system. While Ballou and Podgursky (1999: 48) do not buy into the concept of stronger standards for teacher competence, they contend that post-graduate study and internships yield better teachers.

Others, such as Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1999: 379), argue that policy-makers themselves cannot mandate knowledge, skill, and commitment. These same experts call for the separation of politics from teaching standards through independent boards that

managers who made education a life-long career and who were reshaping the schools according to canons of business efficiency and scientific expertise” (Tyack & Hansot, 1982: 106).

have educators as members. Some states have created independent boards to manage professional teaching standards based on academic standards (Hirsch, et al., 2000: 10).

In Virginia, for example, the *Virginia Licensure Renewal Manual* begins with a rationale for teacher growth through individual responsibility:

One of the most vital qualities of all professionals is the commitment to continuous learning and growth in knowledge and skill. Regardless of the profession, dedicated professionals constantly seek new knowledge, practice new skills, and share their knowledge and skills with peers and associates. Educators who are committed to excellence participate in self-improvement activities that promote both individual and professional competence. The manual provides guidance for all license holders as they plan their personal growth within the profession. It describes a process for renewing Virginia's educators that is flexible, productive, and designed to meet the needs of the individual (1998: 2).

The state of Ohio adopted its *Teacher Education and Licensure Standards* in 1996.

The state then released a guide for educators that allowed them to transition into the new licensure system. The introduction explains how the standards were created using teacher review committees and the benefit of those standards.

These new standards ensure that only those teachers who can perform the work will do the work. The standards emphasize performance – from the time a teacher enters the classroom throughout his or her career. The ultimate benefit of this new direction is a better education for Ohio's students. Believing that higher standards are needed for both schools and educators in order to provide an excellent education for every student, the State Board of Education established the legal guidelines for teacher education and licensure in Ohio that are described in this publication (1996: 2-3).

Alternative Routes to Licensure. Other forms of licensing that many states employ when teacher shortages occur are alternative licensing and emergency licensing. Alternative licensing systems allow degreed individuals to participate in an accelerated program that leads to their licensure while they are working in the classroom. Ballou and Podgursky (1999: 51) contend that individuals who come out of the alternative process are better

prepared for the classroom than their counterparts who receive their license through traditional methods. Nevertheless, effective alternative licensing systems are those that are longer, offer more coursework, and plan for closer supervision (Hirsch, et al, 2000: 12).

Emergency licenses are issued to individuals that hold a bachelor's degree and wish to teach in a public school system. The license allows the individual to teach without being formally enrolled in a program that leads to licensure. Emergency licenses are ordinarily offered in areas of great need, like bilingual education and science.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). In 1987, the NBPTS set out to identify the knowledge, skills, and disposition necessary for accomplished teaching in America's schools (NBPTS, 2001). The board created the first set of national standards for K-12 teachers in specific subject areas and implemented a voluntary certification system that allows any state-licensed teacher to receive a national board certification (Jenkins, 2000: 48). Teachers are then recognized as accomplished in their field after having completed the certification process (NBPTS, 2001).

Karla Jenkins, a third grade teacher, decided to tackle the national certification process after 29 years of experience. She writes about the year-long process and her experience with the performance-based certificate.

To earn certification, teachers must critically assess their own teaching with their students through two components. They prepare a portfolio that contains videotapes of classroom teaching, samples of student work, and written commentary. They also complete assessment-center exercises that give teachers the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and abilities in their certification field. Instead of evaluating a theory or a method, the process focuses on real-world practice and the performance of teaching in all its aspects from planning to execution to evaluation (2000: 46).

Nancy Areglado, a literacy specialist in New Jersey, writes in *the Journal of Staff Development* (1999) that "the NBPTS standards help us to be true professionals in every

sense of the word.” She continues, “We can take risks and evaluate ourselves honestly, allowing ourselves room to grow” (p. 37).

According to the NBPTS (2001), 16 states now offer teachers incentives to participate in the national certification program. State legislatures are counting on the performance-based certification system to improve teaching and learning as well as student achievement on high-stakes tests (Darling-Hammond, et al., 1999: 217).

While the merits of the national certification board are being debated, states are nevertheless responsible for licensing their teachers to the extent that the public feels it necessary. The following sections focus on the essential components of an ideal state licensure system based on the latest research.

Pre-service Education

Pre-service education in an ideal licensure model includes content knowledge, a liberal arts education, and pedagogy.⁶ Ball and Cohen (1999: 11) stress that teaching requires a broad-based knowledge of the subject matter as well as the process by which the subject matter will be taught. Outside the home, the most significant influence on student achievement comes directly from teacher qualifications, including pre-service education (Ball & Darling-Hammond, 1998: 2)

Content Knowledge. The importance of content knowledge as a teaching quality is justified in the following example. Most college degrees put little demands on students to achieve mastery in mathematics, science, history, or English. Yet, high school teachers are thrown into learning opportunities that require them to have mastered the subjects they teach

to students. Theorems in mathematics, for example, are difficult for even the average college graduate. A study by Brewer and Goldhaber (1999) found that students performed better in math when the students' teacher held a bachelor's or master's degree in mathematics. They also concluded that teachers who are certified in the subjects they teach have a more positive impact on student achievement than teachers who were not certified in that subject (Brewer & Goldhaber, 1999: 94).⁷

Having content knowledge allows teachers to employ higher level thinking, which in turn increases student success (Ball & Darling-Hammond, 1998: 16). While this component of pre-service education seldom applies to teachers in early grades who have to teach a variety of subjects, content knowledge prepares teachers to help students acquire more knowledge (Darling-Hammond, 1997: 7). A study by Mary M. Kennedy (1999), professor of education at Michigan State University, suggests that content is more important than the number of credit hours and field hours policymakers try to require of pre-service teachers.

Liberal Arts Education. Because of the vastness of social issues, receiving a liberal arts degree is an important part of pre-service education (Eraut, 1995: 234). The kind of education received in lower-division college courses prepares teachers for diverse classrooms (Goodlad, 1994: 21). For academics like Goodlad (1994: 246), a liberal arts education is the most important part of a teacher's pre-service experience. Since the enactment of basic skills testing for teachers, many colleges have increased their requirements for the liberal arts and sciences (Darling-Hammond, et al., 1995: 96). Kennedy (1999) contends that teaching

⁶ Much of the literature on professional learning suggest that an effective college program for teachers should include content knowledge, liberal arts education, and pedagogy (Ball & Cohen, 1999: 12; Ball & Darling-Hammond, 1998: 3; Fullan, 1995: 261; Goodlad, 1994: 160).

⁷ Ball and Darling-Hammond also site various studies in their work that demonstrate the positive effects of an increased content knowledge base in teacher education programs (1998: 3).

consists of two main parts: a liberal arts background and classroom experiences that refine technique and personal style (p. 54).

Pedagogy. A direct link exists between education coursework and teacher performance in the classroom (Darling-Hammond, et al., 1995: 24). How teachers perform is the crux of this component of pre-service education. Pedagogy deals with the theories of adaptation and engagement in response to the learner (Darling-Hammond & Cohen, 1999: 9). Goodlad (1994: 172) refers to pedagogy as the art and science of teaching. Teachers who have more information about “child and adolescent motivation, development, and cognition” are more effective as teachers (Darling-Hammond, et al., 1995: 24).

Minnesota’s Board of Teaching, for instance, emphasizes subject-specific pedagogy. In its *Vision for Teacher Education*, it includes knowledge about learners and learning, knowledge about curriculum and teaching, and knowledge about contexts and foundations of education (Darling-Hammond, et al., 1995: 35).

Critical to the entire system of licensure is the connection between the pre-service and inservice periods. The North Carolina performance-based licensure system, for example, is based on the guiding principle that pre-service, induction, and service are connected (Buckner, 2001: 63). The next component of an ideal teacher licensure system, the internship, is key to that connection.

Internship

Teachers rarely pass up the opportunity to explain in detail how their internship helped shape their professional learning. The internship, or student teaching opportunity, is typically the final step in a licensure system before the assessment phase. Table 2.1 indicates

how an internship program modeled after other professions would increase teacher professional learning.

Goodlad (1994: 191) refers to the internship as the “fifth year” of college. He sees it as an opportunity for teachers to experience “real-life” situations that can never be taught in a regular college classroom. The critical details of an internship within an ideal licensure system are field-based learning, cohort groups and professional development discourse communities, and professional development schools.

Table 2.1 Teacher Internship Design for Effective Professional Learning
Teacher Internship Design for Effective Professional Learning Based on Models from other Professions

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The intern would not only work directly with [students] but would also observe experienced professionals interacting with [students] and would learn from them.• The intern would assume progressive degrees of responsibility for clients.• The intern would receive regular supervision and guidance from practicing professionals.• The programs would require that all interns experience particular types of situations for decision-making and practice under supervision, including a range of tasks and types of clients.
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(Darling-Hammond, et al. 1995: 128)

Field-based Learning. Fullan (1993: 125) defines field-based learning as the incorporation of theory and practice within an inquiry-based model of learning. Student teachers have the opportunity to practice their theory with direct supervision and guidance as the final phase of most college curricula (Darling-Hammond, et al., 1995: 126). Other professions such as medicine, law, and engineering have built in internships specifically with field-based learning as the core objective.

Darling-Hammond (1997: 10) contends that student teachers immersed in clinical supervision⁸ “interwoven with coursework on learning and teaching” are more successful and remain in the classroom longer than student teachers in conventional teacher education programs. Combined with field-based learning, teachers in the ideal licensure system also experience teamwork concepts such as cohort groups and professional discourse communities.

Cohort Groups and Professional Discourse Communities. An internship allows student teachers the opportunity to belong to a cohort group. The cohort is made up of interns and professionals within the same school that the field-based learning is conducted (Duck, 2000: 44). Ideally, interns use their cohort to begin a continuous dialogue between new and experienced teachers in a process that leads to reflection and learning (Goodlad, 1994: 191).⁹

Ball and Darling-Hammond (1998: 16) see reflection and dialogue as a central part of learning to teach. The concept of the *teacher as reflective practitioner* within a cohort group is examined in Table 2.2.

Professional discourse communities built around successful cohort groups lead to deeper reflective thought (Fullan, 1995: 258).¹⁰ This type of discourse is found among other professions, but seldom seen within the context of education. Senge, et al. (2000) refers to professional learning communities as organizational arrangements that are marked by

⁸ “Field-based learning” is referred to as “clinical supervision” in most literature. Within the context of this research, however, the term “field-based learning” is more suitable as it better describes the relationship between theory and practice.

⁹ Building on a solid foundation of reflective practice leads to a more comprehensive and positive attitude towards continuous learning. “Reflecting on growth toward the profession and planning for growth within the profession are essential for maintaining the freshness of self-renewal and the stamina for effectiveness throughout the career” (Duck, 2000: 42).

¹⁰ Fullan (1995: 258) further identifies professional discourse communities as learning through collaboration, action, and expectations.

reflective dialogue, a focus on student learning, open to improvement, and supportive (p. 326).

Table 2.2

Being a professional practitioner implies:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A moral commitment to serve the interests of students by reflecting on their well-being and their progress and deciding how best it can be fostered or promoted.• A professional obligation to review periodically the nature and effectiveness of one's practice in order to improve the quality of one's management, pedagogy, and decision making.• A professional obligation to continue to develop one's practical knowledge both by personal reflection and through interaction with others.

(Eraut, 1995: 232)

Professional Development Schools. Field-based learning, cohort groups, and professional discourse make up an effective internship program within the context of a professional development school (PDS). A PDS produces better teachers through university/public school partnerships (Fullan, 1993: 125; Levine, 1998: 14). Only recently, have educators begun to refer to these types of public schools as professional development schools.¹¹ Within the walls of a PDS, teachers are interacting with new teachers and public school students in a variety of ways not found elsewhere in the curriculum of teacher education.

Goodlad (1994: 177) notes that undergraduate schools are not good models for those learning to be teachers. Through his observations, Goodlad has concluded that professional

¹¹ By 1996, more than 600 institutions referred to themselves as professional development schools. According to Darling-Hammond, et al. (1999), PDSs could revolutionize teacher professional development across the career continuum.

schools allow for interaction not found in undergraduate schools between professor and student.

Provisional Licensing Examination

A licensing examination should assess knowledge and skills and separate those who are ready to teach from those who are not (Darling-Hammond, et al., 1995: 89). The following components make up the concepts found in a provisional licensing examination within the context of an ideal licensure system.

Professional Teaching Standards. Ineffective licensure examinations are seldom based on quality standards (Darling-Hammond, et al., 1995: 110). The states that currently have standards in place, like Virginia and Ohio, have a comprehensive system that is built around those standards.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS, 2001) have been hailed as quality standards for the profession. In abbreviated form they are:

- 1) Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
- 2) Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.
- 3) Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
- 4) Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
- 5) Teachers are members of learning communities.

State licensing boards have adopted similar standards articulated by the national certification board for initial licensing of their teachers (Darling-Hammond, et al., 1995: 42).

Knowledge and Skills. Darling-Hammond (1997: 9) found that knowledge and skills are critical, not only for teacher success, but ultimately for student success as well. An ideal licensure examination contains a variety of knowledge-based criteria and alternative assessment methods (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2000: 222). Eraut (1995: 234) has divided the field of teacher knowledge into several categories as shown in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3

<i>The Domain of Teachers' Knowledge</i>	
•	Subject-matter knowledge
•	Education knowledge
•	Societal knowledge
•	Classroom knowledge
•	Classroom-related knowledge
•	Managerial knowledge
•	Other professional knowledge

Induction Period

Once a teacher has been licensed, in some states that individual holds the teaching license for life, barring any revocation by law. Most states, however, have adopted induction or first-year programs to help new teachers adjust to the profession (INTASC, 2001). The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium has concluded, "that the appropriate distinctions between beginning and advanced practices are in the degree of sophistication teachers exhibit in the application of knowledge rather than in the kind of knowledge needed" (INTASC, 2001).

Darling-Hammond et al. (1999) found that well-designed induction programs are critical to new teacher success. Notwithstanding teacher success, teachers who leave the profession prematurely do so because of a lack of recognition and support from administrators and schools (Darling-Hammond, 1997: 21).

Sound programs, such as those found in Ohio and Connecticut, affect the length of employment in the profession (Hirsch, et al., 2000: 12). The state of Ohio, for example, measures new teacher success through student success in the Entry Year Program. Table 2.4 depicts the ten areas that mentors evaluate their new teachers within the Ohio system.

Table 2.4

<i>Performance-based Criteria for the Entry Year Program</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject matter • Student Learning • Diversity of Learners • Planning Instruction • Instructional Strategies • Learning Environments • Communications • Assessment • Professional development • Student support

(Ohio Department of Education, 1996: 5)

Mentor Program. An important part of the inservice component during the induction period is the mentor program¹². Mentor programs establish the supportive culture between pre-service teachers, new teachers, and veteran teachers (Fullan, 1995: 261). Nevertheless, Darling-Hammond, et al. (1999:217), found only a handful of states that offer funding for adequate training of mentors. One noted exception is Connecticut's Beginning Educator Support and Training Program. The program provides money for individual master teachers to mentor new teachers going through national certification.

Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1999: 381) discovered that the initial experiences on the job provide extensive knowledge about teaching and learning. Mentors

¹² "A mentor provides the newcomer with support, guidance, feedback, problem-solving guidance, and a network of colleagues who share resources, insights, practices, and materials" (Robbins, 1999: 40).

assess their new teacher's performance through interactive portfolios in the ideal licensure system.

Interactive Portfolios. A practical way of demonstrating performance is through portfolios¹³. Teachers already use portfolios in the classroom to show student progress to administrators and parents. During the induction period, new teachers can use portfolios to illustrate their performance through videotapes, student products, and reflections (Ball, Darling-Hammond, 1998: 20).

Portfolios are the tools that bare witness to the improvement of the teacher and the students (Cushman, 1999: 747.) Videotaped lessons offer teachers the opportunity to see the many interactions that take place within the walls of a classroom. "Videotape also offers a concrete context for close study of students, pedagogy, content, and learning in other contexts such as pre-service teacher education and ongoing professional development" (Ball & Darling-Hammond, 1998: 21).

Performance-based Assessment. A performance-based assessment¹⁴ offers teachers the opportunity to assemble evidence of their professional work so that it can be evaluated against standards of practice (Darling-Hammond, 1998: 20). Darling-Hammond, Wise, and Klein (1995: 4) explain the advantages of a performance-based assessment:

Assessment through a careful and systematic review of on-the-job performance in a structured internship program, supplemented by evaluation of performance on realistic and appropriately complex teaching tasks, provides the possibility of more successfully judging prospective teachers' readiness to teach.

¹³ Portfolios are "a collection of items gathered over time which forms the basis for discussion by colleagues or members of a group" (Dietz, 1999: 45).

¹⁴ The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium describes performance-based as that which teachers should know and be able to do (INTASC, 2001).

According to Darling-Hammond, Wise, and Klein (1995: 4), eighteen states have adopted similar measures that focus on performance-based assessments. The authors also add that new testing material is being furnished by testing companies that meets the demands for performance-based assessments. After the provisional license-holding teacher has experienced a mentor program, interactive portfolios, and performance-based assessments, the next step in the process is to receive a professional license.

Professional Licensing. The difference between a provisional and professional license is rather clear. A provisional license is issued only once at the beginning of a teacher's career as the new teacher begins the induction period. The professional license is subsequently issued after the successful completion of the induction period, which generally lasts about two to three years. The professional license is also renewable after a set number of years upon completion of the requirements issued in law. The following section reveals the essential components of a renewal process set in an ideal teacher licensure system.

Renewal Process

An effective teacher licensure renewal process includes a professional development plan that is reviewed by a peer review committee at the local level and includes evidence of student achievement.

Professional Development Plan. Eraut (1995: 250) recommends that a professional development plan balance between the teacher's personal needs and the needs of the school. He adds that an individualized professional development plan be reviewed on a yearly basis to sustain continuous learning and flexibility (Eraut, 1995: 251.) A professional development plan offers teachers the ability to adjust instruction and personal growth to meet the needs of

his or her students. Ultimately, professional development opportunities help teachers learn what their students need them to learn.

A recent California initiative involving the California State Board of Education sought to find the characteristics of high quality professional development, and created 10 design elements to achieve their purpose of providing each student with a competent teacher (Kent & Lingman, 2000: 34). Table 2.5 lists the characteristics from the California Professional Development Reform Initiative.

Table 2.5

Characteristics of Quality Professional Development Design
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uses student performance and achievement data, including student feedback, teacher observation, analysis of student work and test scores, as part of the process for individual and organizational learning.• Uses a coherent long-term professional development planning process, connected to the school plan, that reflects both site-based priorities and individual learning needs.• Provides time for professional learning to occur in a meaningful manner.• Respects and encourages the leadership development of teachers.• Develops, refines, and expands teachers' pedagogical repertoire, content knowledge, and the skill to integrate both.• Provides for and promotes the use of continuous inquiry and reflection.• Provides for collaboration and collegial work, balanced with opportunities for individual learning.• Follows the principles of good teaching and learning, including providing comfortable, respectful environments conducive to adult learning.• Creates broad-based support of professional development from all

sectors of the organization and community through reciprocal processes for providing information and soliciting feedback.

- Builds in accountability practices and evaluation of professional development programs to provide a foundation for future planning.

(Kent & Lingman, 2000: 34)

Professional development plans that are comprehensive, standards-based, and learner focused tend to improve student scores, which is central to any professional development plan (Hirsch, et al., 2000: 12). Guskey (1997: 39) contends that professional development plans are job-embedded, and a part of the overall picture for school improvement. “Professional development is an indispensable part of all forms of leadership and collegial sharing” (Guskey, 1997: 39).

Peer Review. Peer review programs are used to assess teachers in many states (Hirsch, et al., 2000: 11). The purpose of a peer review committee is to gather evidence of teacher growth based on professional development opportunities that benefited their students. Peer review and peer assistance have often been linked together. Claims have been made by the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future that more teachers have received help by peer review programs, and more teachers have been dismissed for poor performance by peer review committees than by traditional methods of assessment (Hertling, 1999: 27).

Both Illinois and Ohio have implemented Local Professional Development Committees (LPDC) to accomplish peer review. It is a hotly contested idea that “suggests these reviews can be thorough and rigorous, but a closer examination will demonstrate how well the peer review process works over time” (Hirsch, et al., 2000: 11). Peer review

programs require a high-level of trust and cooperation; although, the benefits of peer review seem to outweigh the difficulties (Hertling, 1999: 28).

Student Achievement. As the final component of a professional teacher licensure system, student achievement is the cornerstone and impetus for teacher quality, and ultimately, school improvement. “An important goal is to create a system for licensing that ensures the kind of learning for teachers that will facilitate the kinds of learning desired of children” (Darling-Hammond, et al., 1995: 93).

Ball and Darling-Hammond sum up best the link between professional development and student achievement:

Professional development that links theory and practice, that creates discourse around problems of practice, that is content-based and student-centered, and that engages teachers in analysis of teaching can support the serious teacher learning needed to engender powerful student achievement (1998: 29).

Teachers in the ideal licensure system are required to show the link between their professional learning and their students’ performance to renew the professional teaching license. Relying on “seat-time” hours is not enough to ensure teacher quality in the classroom. Guskey (1997: 39) views professional development as an ongoing activity embedded in the professional life of an educator.

Conceptual Framework

A review of the literature allows the opportunity to observe the multifaceted aspects of an ideal teacher licensure system. A solid system that includes pre-service education, an internship, a provisional licensing examination, an induction period, and a renewal process with a focus on student achievement will not only serve to improve teacher quality, but

improve education as a whole. States must begin to analyze the latest research on teaching and learning to affect the necessary changes that will bring about the best possible solutions for school improvement.

The primary goal of the literature review was to create a conceptual framework of the practical ideal teacher licensure system. “From a [public administration] perspective, ideals are useful because they provide a point of departure for policy recommendations” (Shields, 1998: 219). The practical ideal type is arranged using categories that describe the necessary components of a teacher licensing system. Topics on education, teaching, learning, students, and schools have been thoroughly researched to achieve this goal. The conceptual framework found in Table 2.6 was developed from the research reflected in the literature. The table shows a linkage between the practical ideal concepts and the literature.

Conclusion

Michael Fullan called for “a new mindset about educational change” in 1993 (p. 3). Almost eight years later, the public is clamoring for more radical change in our schools to meet the demands of a diverse economy.

Over the last decade, several states have made considerable systemic changes to their state policies concerning teaching and learning. The most substantial changes came from North Carolina and Connecticut. “Both of these states . . . coupled major statewide increases in teacher salaries and improvements in teacher salary equity with intensive recruitment efforts and initiatives to improve pre-service teacher education, licensing, beginning teacher mentoring, and ongoing professional development” (Darling-Hammond, 1999: 16). Both

states have shown significant increases in student achievement. North Carolina's students posted the largest increase, and Connecticut's students rank near the top (p. 16).

It stands to reason that states who want to increase student achievement must be willing to invest in teacher education and training to enhance their teachers' knowledge and skills (Darling-Hammond, 1999: 37). Improvements in teacher quality can make the difference. The following chapter establishes the research setting by describing historical and current initiatives associated with the teacher licensure system in Texas.

Table 2.6: Linkage of Ideal Type Components to Literature Sources

Ideal Type Components	Sources
Pre-service Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content Knowledge • Liberal Arts Education • Pedagogy 	Ball & Cohen 1999 Ball & Darling-Hammond 1998 Brewer & Goldhaber 1999 Buckner 2001 Darling-Hammond 1997 Darling-Hammond, et al. 1995 Eraut 1995 Fullan 1993 Goodlad 1994
Internship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field-based Learning • Cohort groups and Professional Discourse Communities • Professional Development Schools 	Ball & Darling-Hammond 1998 Darling-Hammond 1997 Darling-Hammond, et al. 1995 Fullan 1993 Fullan 1995 Goodlad 1994 Senge 2000
Provisional Licensing Examination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Teaching Standards • Knowledge and Skills 	Darling-Hammond 1997 Darling-Hammond, et al. 1995 Darling-Hammond, et al. 2000 Eraut 1995
Induction Period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor Program • Interactive Portfolios • Performance-based Assessment • Professional Licensing 	Ball & Darling-Hammond 1998 Cushman 1999 Darling-Hammond, et al. 1999 Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin 1999 Duck 2000 Eraut 1995 Fullan 1995 Hirsch et al. 2000 Ohio Dept. of Ed. 1996
Renewal Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Development Plan • Peer Review • Student Achievement 	Ball & Darling-Hammond 1998 Darling-Hammond, et al. 1995 Eraut 1995 Guskey 1997 Hirsch et al. 2000 Kent & Lingman 2000 Ohio Dept. of Ed. 1996

Chapter 3

Research Setting

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the systemic setting that is the focus of the research on the case study of the Texas teacher licensure system. The chapter begins by describing a brief history of the Texas public school system. The chapter also provides a general description of the Texas teacher licensure system through an examination of current laws and rules. The chapter concludes with a brief examination of current initiatives that will affect the teacher licensure system in Texas in the future.

A Brief History of the Texas Public School System

To understand the relationship and the role of the various agencies involved with public education in Texas, a brief history of public education in the state is described.¹⁵ Since the first public school law was enacted in Texas in 1840, Texas has provided for and supported the notion of free public schools through state tax revenue. In 1884, the position of state superintendent was created to oversee the public school system and the Permanent School Fund, which today provides approximately \$500 million a year to local school districts. The push for improved public education in the state gained momentum in 1949 with the passage of the Gilmer-Aiken laws, which created the program to apportion state funds to local school districts. This piece of legislation also reorganized the administration of public education by creating an elected State Board of Education, appointing a

¹⁵ The information contained in this section was retrieved from the Texas Education Agency's Web site at www.tea.state.tx.us.

commissioner of education, and reorganizing the administration of Texas public school policy through the Texas Education Agency. Since then, House Bill 72 in 1984 and Senate Bill 1 in 1995 made dramatic changes to the public school system.

Senate Bill 1 (1995) created a new agency to oversee educator certification¹⁶ in the state. This new agency was appropriately called the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC). The SBEC is a twelve-member appointed board consisting of teachers, administrators, and public members. It was created to recognize public school educators as professionals and grant educators the authority to govern the standards of their profession. The SBEC is under the authority of the State Board of Education (SBOE). The SBOE oversees the public education system in Texas with its fifteen elected members. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is the administrative agency for public education under the control of the SBOE and the commissioner of education.

The Texas Teacher Licensure System

The current system for licensing teachers in Texas has gone through some significant changes in recent years. Along with creating the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC), the legislature in 1995 instituted several new laws that would govern the agency and its procedures. One of those laws provided for the agency to create a renewable license for teachers in the state of Texas. Before this law, educators who met the criteria for Texas teacher certification were awarded a lifetime license in their area of licensure.

¹⁶ In Texas, the teaching credential is referred to as a certificate, not a license. For purposes of this study, the word *license* is used to describe the teaching credential offered by any state licensing board, and *certificate* refers to an advanced credential given to an individual from a national standards-based professional organization.

To receive a teaching license in Texas, an individual must hold a bachelor's degree with coursework in three areas: a broad general education, an academic specialization, and teaching knowledge and skills. Before admission to an approved teacher preparation program, teacher candidates must demonstrate basic academic skills by passing tests in reading, mathematics, and writing. To receive a license, candidates must pass an examination of professional knowledge and knowledge of content. The Examination for the Certification of Educators in Texas (ExCET) is given to candidates who have satisfied the requirements for licensure.

There are five ways an individual may become a licensed educator in Texas. The first is the traditional method, a university-based program in Texas approved by the SBEC. These programs are usually delivered as part of a baccalaureate degree program. Secondly, an individual may become licensed through an alternative program approved by the SBEC. These programs may involve university coursework or other professional development experiences as well as mentoring and supervision. The alternative programs are usually administered through a region education service center¹⁷ or a school district. A third method of teacher licensure is called "certification by examination." An individual that currently holds a license in a licensure area may add additional licensure areas by successfully completing the appropriate examination. Fourthly, another method of teacher licensure in Texas involves the recognition of out-of-state licenses. These individuals may become licensed in Texas through careful review by the SBEC. The fifth, and final, method of licensure in Texas is the emergency license. School districts are given the option of hiring an

¹⁷ The state of Texas is divided into 20 educational regions. Each region contains a service center that provides teachers and schools within the region the necessary resources to accomplish their goals. For more information about the regional service centers see www.tea.state.tx.us.

individual in a critical need area under certain conditions as established by the SBEC. Once a person becomes licensed in Texas through the renewable license, he must then satisfy the requirements for renewing the license.

All Texas educators who hold a *Standard Certificate*, the renewable license effective September 1, 1999, must renew the license every five years. To complete the renewal process, an educator must complete a total of 150 clock hours of continuing professional education from an SBEC-approved provider. Educators with the lifetime license were never required by the state to complete any continuing professional education training. With this new renewable licensure system, the lifetime license holders are not required to participate in the renewing of a license. These educators were “grandfathered” from the new system.

In summary, new teachers who are licensed with the Standard Certificate from an approved method of licensure are only required to attend 150 clock hours of continuing professional education training courses within a five-year period. The SBEC has created procedures for educators to submit the required documentation to the Board for license renewal purposes.

Current Initiatives

The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) is currently involved in two major initiatives that will affect teacher licensure in the future¹⁸. The new educator standards and test frameworks are presently being developed for teacher candidates who test for licensure in the fall of 2002. The Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS) is currently

¹⁸ The information contained in this section was retrieved from the State Board for Educator Certification's Web site at www.sbec.state.tx.us.

being piloted to assist new teachers with support and mentors in the first two years of their career.

New Educator Standards and Test Frameworks. The SBEC has begun work on the educator standards that will be used in the development of test frameworks for the new Examination for Certification of Educators in Texas (ExCET). The approved standards are intended for use by SBEC-approved educator preparation programs and serve as the basis for the new test frameworks. Teacher candidates will be expected to possess the knowledge and skills identified in the new standards.

Texas Beginning Educator Support System. The SBEC is piloting a new program designed to develop support systems for new teachers in their first and second years. The Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS) is a project designed to meet the needs of students, teachers, and schools through regional partnerships. As part of the continuum that encourages reflective practices throughout a teacher's career, TxBESS is focused on producing successful teaching practices that lead to increased student achievement.

The next chapter reveals the operationalization of the conceptual framework. An explanation of the research design is also included.

Chapter 4

Research Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the research methodology used in this study. Since this study is prescriptive and uses a practical ideal type, employing the case study as the strategy to investigate and gather data on the Texas teacher licensure system accomplishes the task. Document analysis and focused interviews, described in this chapter, are the sources of evidence used to conduct the case study. Also presented in this chapter is the operationalization of the ideal type categories developed in the conceptual framework.

Research Design

The research design selected for this research is the case study. Babbie (1998) refers to the case study as an “idiographic examination” (p. 282). The case study gives the researcher the opportunity to examine realistic conditions using the grounded theory¹⁹, which begins with observations and then proposes prevailing categories (Babbie, 1998: 283). Two reasons for using the case study methodology are: first, a case study uses real-life context to uncover certain phenomenon; and second, a case study lends itself to multiple approaches, and is therefore, a comprehensive research strategy (Yin, 1994: 13).

The unit of analysis in this research is a system, or a collection of independent variables that define a system. In this case, the variables have been established during the

¹⁹ The “grounded theory” was first used by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in a 1967 book titled *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (Babbie, 1998: 283). Babbie explains that the grounded theory allows for the discovery of the unexpected.

literature review, and before gathering the data. The research involves multiple sources of evidence and utilizes case study protocol (Yin, 1994: 33).

The case study, as a type of field research, yields qualitative data, not easily reduced to numbers (Babbie, 1998: 280). The strengths and weaknesses of field research are highlighted in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Strengths and Weaknesses of Field Research

Strengths	Weaknesses
Depth of understanding	Statistical descriptions of large groups
Flexibility	Problems with reliability
Superior validity	Personal judgments

(Babbie, 1998: 303)

Since statistics are not used in this study, the apparent weakness associated with case study research and the statistical descriptions of large groups is not relevant. Issues of reliability and personal judgments are overcome through the research not being purely descriptive. Documents such as state laws and agency rules combined with interviews produce findings that are more factual and less subjective, thus eliminating the inherent weaknesses in this study.

The two main sources of evidence for this research are document analysis and focused interviews. Table 4.2 illustrates the operationalization of the conceptual framework through the research methods, evidence, and sources that are utilized in the research.

Document Analysis

Document analysis was chosen to assess the Texas teacher licensure system using the practical ideal type as a standard. In this study, documents are examined to provide the necessary details that will be corroborated by other sources. "Because of their overall value, documents play an explicit role in any data collection in doing case studies" (Yin, 1994: 81).

Documents can be reviewed repeatedly and are unobtrusive²⁰. Yin (1994) explains that the strength of document analysis is evident through the comprehensive coverage and accuracy of the documents used in the research (p. 80).

Some of the weaknesses evident in document analysis are retrievability, biased selectivity, reporting bias, and access (Yin, 1994: 80). The documents selected for this research are open-record documents and easily accessible to the public. While the licensure system itself is a collection of individual parts, the documents are complete within their scope and boundaries. Reporting bias has been eliminated by having a key informant familiar with the documents and the topic of teacher licensure review the draft of the applied research project. Dr. Sharon Jackson, Executive Director of Professional Development at the Round Rock Independent School District in Round Rock, Texas, reviewed the study and offered suggestions for improvement.

Focused Interviews

In this study, focused interviews are used to corroborate the findings from the document analysis. Yin (1994) describes focused interviews as short, open-ended interviews that follow a certain pattern derived from, in this case, the literature review (p. 84). “Interviews are also essential sources of case study information” (Yin, 1994: 84). Babbie (1994) contends that interviews are an integral part of any field research (p. 292). Focused interviews by their very nature are targeted and insightful.

The inherent weaknesses regarding interviews are bias and reflexivity. Yin (1994) defines reflexivity as the situation whereby the interviewee gives the answer that the

²⁰ Unobtrusive research studies behaviors or artifacts without affecting them (Babbie, 1998: 330). In this study, state laws and agency rules are analyzed without changing them or affecting them throughout the process.

interviewer expects to hear (p. 80). The focused interviews for this study are conducted through Email; therefore, the interviewee is shielded from affecting bias or reflexivity regarding the interviewer and the questions. For this research, field practitioners and agency personnel are interviewed to corroborate the document analysis. The questions stem directly from the ideal type categories and are suited to assess how closely the teacher licensure system in Texas follows the ideal type developed in the conceptual framework.

Operationalization of the Conceptual Framework

Operationalizing the research methods to the conceptual framework connects the ideal type categories to the data collection. The conceptual framework, developed from the review of the literature, provides the basis for the gathering of data from both the document analysis and the focused interviews. Table 4.2 illustrates how the categories are operationalized using the aforementioned research methods. The code sheet for the document analysis is found in Appendix A. The focused interview questions sent by Email to the various respondents can be found in Appendix D. The next chapter reveals the results of this study.

Table 4.2 Operationalizing the Conceptual Framework

Ideal Type Categories	Research Methods	Evidence	Sources
Preservice Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content Knowledge • Liberal Arts Education • Pedagogy 	Document Analysis Interview	-Program requirements are clearly stated in rule/law -Accreditation standards -Course requirements	Texas Education Code Chapter 21: Educators (Appendix B) Texas Administrative Code, Title 19 (Appendix C) University Certification Officer (Appendix D)
Internship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field-based Learning • Cohort groups and Professional Discourse Communities • Professional Development Schools 	Document Analysis Interview	-Program requirements are clearly stated in rule/law -Measurement instruments -Observation data collected and analyzed -Classroom observations -Mentor and teacher trainee responsibilities	Texas Education Code Chapter 21: Educators (Appendix B) Texas Administrative Code, Title 19 (Appendix C) Director of Center for Professional Teacher Training (Appendix D)
Provisional Licensing Examination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Teaching Standards • Knowledge and Skills 	Document Analysis Interview	-Program requirements are clearly stated in rule/law -Standards are measurable -Test questions derived from standards -Knowledge stems from pre-service education -Skills stem from internship	Texas Education Code Chapter 21: Educators (Appendix B) Texas Administrative Code, Title 19 (Appendix C) ExCET Study Guides and Preparation Manuals Director of Certification, SBEC (Appendix D)
Induction Period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor Program • Interactive Portfolios • Performance-based Assessment • Professional Licensing 	Document Analysis Interview	-Program requirements are clearly stated in rule/law -Inductees use portfolio for growth and assessment purposes -Standards are in place for individuals moving from provisional to professional license -Mentor program involves training	Texas Administrative Code, Title 19 (Appendix C) Texas Beginning Educator Support System: Program Standards (www.sbec.state.tx.us) Director of the Texas Beginning Educator Support System, SBEC (Appendix D)
Renewal Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Development Plan • Peer Review • Student Achievement 	Document Analysis Interview	-Peer review team consists of a majority of teachers -Renewal and all licensing is a state function -Professional development plans are required of all educators -Teacher growth and student achievement are the focus of renewal	Texas Administrative Code, Title 19 (Appendix C) Certificate Renewal Requirement Information (www.sbec.state.tx.us) Director of Professional Development and Certificate Renewal, SBEC (Appendix D)

Chapter 5

Summary of Results

This chapter presents the results of the case study. A document analysis was conducted to compare the Texas teacher licensure²¹ system with the practical ideal type licensure system developed from a review of the literature (see chapter 2). The state laws analyzed for this study can be found in Appendix B. Rules analyzed for this study are located in Appendix C. Focused interviews were conducted with university officials and state agency personnel to corroborate the document analysis. Questions posed to various university officials and agency personnel can be found in Appendix D, while their responses are detailed in Appendix E. The ideal type categories are used to frame the outline of the analysis.

Pre-service Education

As described in chapter three, the characteristics of pre-service education within an ideal licensure system are content knowledge, liberal arts education, and pedagogy. Table 5.1 summarizes the findings for the pre-service education category from the document analysis of the Texas teacher licensure system.

²¹ In Texas, the teaching credential is referred to as a certificate, not a license. For purposes of this study, the word *license* is used to describe the teaching credential offered by any state licensing board, and *certificate* refers to an advanced credential given to an individual from a national standards-based professional organization.

Table 5.1 Document Analysis Findings for the Pre-service Education Category

Ideal Type Category	Documents	Findings
Pre-service Education	Texas Education Code Chapter 21: Educators	
• Content Knowledge	Texas Administrative Code, Title 19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
• Liberal Arts Education		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No ²²
• Pedagogy		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Chapter 21 of the Texas Education Code²³ stipulates that an applicant for the Texas teaching certificate must have earned a bachelor's degree with an academic major or interdisciplinary academic major. The law does not require individuals to have earned a liberal arts degree, but universities require all students to enroll in core courses that may satisfy the liberal arts background requirement. The law does specify, however, that the State Board of Education (SBOE) can set a minimum number of content courses not to exceed 18 hours for a teaching license. This means that an individual may hold a history degree and teach mathematics if she has the minimum required number of hours of math courses. This flexibility by the SBOE allows the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC)²⁴ to grant certificates to individuals with varying college degrees.

Chapter 19 of the Texas Administrative Code²⁵ requires that applicants not only have academic specialization, meaning that they have content knowledge courses, but also pedagogical courses. The rule refers to this as teaching-learning processes, human growth and development, and knowledge and skills concerning the unique needs of special learners.

²² Since the state does not require a liberal arts degree, but universities require 46 hours of core courses to meet their accreditation requirements, both "yes" and "no" are marked to represent those findings.

²³ The Texas Education Code is derived from laws passed by the Texas legislature and signed by the governor of Texas.

²⁴ The State Board for Educator Certification is a separate entity under the control of the State Board of Education and is the sole grantor of teaching certificates in Texas.

²⁵ The Texas Administrative Code are rules established by the State Board of Education and govern the public education system in Texas.

The code also includes the requirement of methodology courses dealing with instructional methods and strategies, curriculum organization, and classroom management.

A certification specialist at the University of Texas at Austin, Laura Mekanick, was contacted about contributing to the study. The focused interview dealt with questions concerning pre-service education requirements. Ms. Mekanick's responses corroborated the findings of the document analysis. "An applicant for teacher certification would have to have a bachelor's degree but it could be in many different things depending on what level . . . and what subject area they want to teach" (Mekanick, 2001). The interview with Ms. Mekanick also confirmed the analysis that pedagogy and content area courses are required, though the certification area may dictate differing hour requirements. It can be safely concluded that the state of Texas has provisions in law and rule that address most of the pre-service education characteristics of the ideal licensure system, with the exception of the liberal arts requirement.

Internship

The internship category of the conceptual framework developed from the literature review in chapter 2 lists three characteristics: field-based learning, cohort groups and professional discourse communities, and professional development schools. Table 5.2 reveals the summary of findings for the internship category from the document analysis of the Texas teacher licensure system.

Table 5.2 Document Analysis Findings for the Internship Category

Ideal Type Category	Documents	Findings
Internship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field-based Learning Cohort groups and Professional Discourse Communities Professional Development Schools 	Texas Education Code Chapter 21: Educators Texas Administrative Code, Title 19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

While state law allows the State Board of Education (SBOE) to develop a process for establishing professional development schools, it is not a requirement that an applicant for teacher licensure enroll in such a school. The law does stipulate, however, that the SBOE propose rules establishing the training requirements a person must accomplish, including an internship. The internship prerequisite implies that a teacher license candidate has the opportunity to apply what he has learned in a field-based program. The Texas Administrative Code directs educator preparation entities to provide evidence of relevant field-based experiences in a variety of educational settings with diverse student populations. These experiences must include observation, modeling, and a demonstration of effective practices to improve student learning.

Neither the state laws nor the agency rules make mention of cohort groups and professional discourse communities. Dr. Paul Paese, Associate Dean and Director of the Office of Teacher Education and Field Experiences at Southwest Texas State University, corroborated the data found in the document analysis. In the interview, Dr. Paese eluded to the fact that while “the majority of teacher preparation programs in Texas have something based on the professional development schools (PDS) model,” it is not a legal requirement for a teaching applicant in Texas to enroll in a professional development school or participate

in cohort groups and professional discourse communities as described in the conceptual framework (Paese, 2001).

Provisional Licensing Examination

According to a review of the literature, a provisional licensing examination should be based on professional teaching standards and the knowledge and skills an educator needs to possess to impact student achievement. The state of Texas does not currently have provisions for a beginning teacher license that would allow individuals the time to grow professionally through an induction period that would ultimately lead to a professional license. Table 5.3 summarizes the findings for the provisional licensing examination category.

Table 5.3 Document Analysis Findings for the Provisional Licensing Examination Category

Ideal Type Category	Documents	Findings
Provisional Licensing Examination	Texas Education Code Chapter 21: Educators	
• Professional Teaching Standards	Texas Administrative Code, Title 19	____ Yes <u>X</u> No
• Knowledge and Skills	ExCET Study Guides and Preparation Manuals	<u>X</u> Yes ____ No

The current teacher examination in Texas, the Examination for the Certification of Educators in Texas (ExCET), measures teaching knowledge and the interdisciplinary nature of the curriculum. In addition, the ExCET assesses each content area as defined by a set of competencies that correspond to curriculum guidelines, materials, and current research on teaching practices. At this time, the state does not have a set of professional teaching standards from which the examination for teacher licensure is created. Rather, the state uses a set of frameworks based on teacher expectations that outlines certain competencies. These

competencies are broad, conceptual statements that reflect the knowledge and skills that an entry-level teacher needs to have in order to be successful in the classroom.

Marilyn Cook from the Office of Accountability at the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) corroborates the findings of the document analysis. Ms. Cook states that “the ExCET tests are designed to assess the professional knowledge and skills of entry-level educators seeking certification to practice in Texas public schools” (Cook, 2001). The interview brought to light the new initiatives currently at work at the SBEC. A standards-based system for certifying teachers is being implemented that reflects the knowledge and skills teachers must possess to improve student achievement. “Rather than describing certification standards in terms of semester credit hour-based coursework, . . . the standards define what a beginning educator should know (knowledge) and be able to do (skills) . . .” (Cook, 2001). Therefore, while the SBEC is working to create a standards-based teacher licensure examination that will assess knowledge and skills, the current examination does not meet the criteria established in the conceptual framework dealing with professional teaching standards as the impetus for the teacher licensure examination.

Induction Period

The ideal type teacher licensure system contains a support plan for beginning educators that consist of a mentor program, interactive portfolios, and a performance-based assessment that leads to a professional license. Table 5.4 summarizes the findings for the induction period category.

Table 5.4 Document Analysis Findings for the Induction Period Category

Ideal Type Category	Documents	Findings
Induction Period	Texas Administrative Code, Title 19	
• Mentor Program	Texas Beginning Educator Support System:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
• Interactive Portfolios	Program Standards	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
• Performance-based Assessment	(www.sbec.state.tx.us)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
• Professional Licensing		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

The state of Texas requires in law that the State Board of Education (SBOE) establish rules concerning the training requirements an individual must accomplish to obtain a certificate, enter an internship, or enter an induction-year program. The Texas Administrative Code has two stipulations for an induction program:

- 1) beginning teachers who do not have prior teaching experience shall be assigned a mentor teacher; and,
- 2) beginning teachers shall participate in teacher orientation, which may include specialized induction-year program activities.

Neither state laws nor agency rules require that new teachers participate in an induction program that assesses their performance and leads to a professional license.

Dr. Diane Hess, program administrator at the SBEC, is currently involved in the implementation of a pilot program that develops support systems for beginning teachers. The Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS) is a project of the SBEC that is being piloted by the 20 state region Education Service Centers²⁶ and is designed to meet the needs of students, beginning teachers, and schools. Dr. Hess verified the findings of the document

²⁶ The state of Texas is divided into 20 educational regions. Each region contains a service center that provides teachers and schools within the region the necessary resources to accomplish their goals. For more information about the regional service centers see www.tea.state.tx.us.

analysis. “TxBESS is not a component in the licensing of teachers. We have no ‘provisional’ licenses for beginning teachers . . .” (Hess, 2001). While the pilot induction program is not presently a part of the teacher licensure system, it does establish interactive portfolios and performance-based assessments.

Renewal Process

The renewal process in an ideal teacher licensure system consists of a professional development plan that goes through a peer review process and is wholly based on improving student achievement through best teaching practices. Table 5.5 summarizes the findings for the renewal process category as used to assess the Texas teacher licensure system.

Table 5.5 Document Analysis Findings for the Renewal Process Category

Ideal Type Category	Documents	Findings
Renewal Process		
• Professional Development Plan	Texas Administrative Code, Title 19	____ Yes <u>X</u> No
• Peer Review	Certificate Renewal Requirement Information (www.sbec.state.tx.us)	____ Yes <u>X</u> No
• Student Achievement		____ Yes <u>X</u> No

Texas Senate Bill 1 (1995) established the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and required the SBEC to specify the requirements for the issuance and renewal of an educator certificate. The SBEC adopted the rules that govern the renewal process for the Standard Certificate²⁷. Educators who hold the Standard Certificate must complete 150 clock hours of continuing professional education credit (CPE) during each five-year renewal period. At least 80% of the CPE activities should be directly related to the certificate being

²⁷ The Standard Certificate refers to the professional license educators receive in the state of Texas to practice teaching in the public school system. The individual must renew the Standard Certificate every 5 years and follow the criteria set forth by the SBEC.

renewed and focus on the standards required for the issuance of the certificate, including content area knowledge and skills, professional ethics and standards of conduct, and professional development encompassing an array of topics set forth by the SBEC. Neither state laws nor SBEC rules require the educator to create a professional development plan aimed at improving student achievement that is reviewed by a peer review committee.

Dr. Susan Hetzler, program administrator for the SBEC, was interviewed for the study to corroborate the data from the document analysis. Dr. Hetzler noted that the teacher licensure renewal process in Texas does not require a professional development plan or a peer review committee. She did comment that the term educator refers to different classes of individuals working in the public school system. More specifically, the requirements for the principal or superintendent certificate, for example, do require mentors, a professional development plan, and peer review as part of the process.

While the teacher license renewal process is not based on student achievement, Dr. Hetzler remarked that the process is based on “individual needs, district [and] campus priorities, self-improvement, [and] additional knowledge . . .” (Hetzler, 2001).

Clearly, the Texas teacher licensure system does not comply with the overall criteria established in the conceptual framework from the current literature on teacher licensure. For conclusions and recommendations, see chapter 6.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to assess the Texas teacher licensure system using a practical ideal type system developed from current literature on teacher licensure. The study described the characteristics consistent with an ideal teacher licensure system, and collected data to compare the teacher licensure system in Texas to the ideal characteristics. This chapter offers conclusions to the study and recommendations to the state of Texas to improve the current teacher licensure system in the state. Also included in this chapter are ideas for future research on this topic. Table 6.1 summarizes the results as presented in the previous chapter. The ideal type categories are used to frame the outline of the recommendations.

Pre-service Education Recommendations

The kind of education teachers receive before they enter the classroom is critical to any licensure system. Although the state of Texas has made great strides to improve pre-service education of potential teachers, the state legislature needs to ensure that individuals who aspire to become teachers hold a liberal arts degree. Allowing the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) the flexibility to award licenses to individuals who are not knowledgeable in certain content areas leads to unprepared teachers and low student performance (Darling-Hammond, et al., 1999: 199). At the same time, school districts are hiring teachers for subjects they are not qualified to teach. The lack of rules and laws that

prohibit these kinds of practices affects the teacher quality movement as well as the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers.

Table 6.1 Summary of Results

Ideal Type Category	Results
Pre-service Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content Knowledge Liberal Arts Education Pedagogy 	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
Internship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field-based Learning Cohort groups and Professional Discourse Communities Professional Development Schools 	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
Provisional Licensing Examination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Teaching Standards Knowledge and Skills 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
Induction Period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mentor Program Interactive Portfolios Performance-based Assessment Professional Licensing 	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
Renewal Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Development Plan Peer Review Student Achievement 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>

The SBEC should raise standards by requiring individuals to hold a liberal arts degree in the content area in which they wish to receive a teacher license. This will ensure that teacher knowledge will not impede a student's ability to understand the subject matter.

Internship Recommendations

As part of the pre-service education of teachers, the internship is an important component of any teacher licensure system. Requiring teacher candidates to observe and participate in a field-based program when the program does not require student teachers to participate in cohort groups and professional discourse communities is a disservice to teacher candidates. **The state should mandate all colleges and universities to form these types of consortiums with local schools, enabling student teachers the opportunity to interact with professionals in a learning environment.** The professional dialogue at this stage of a teacher's career is critical to the long-term success of that teacher.

The state should also support teacher preparation programs through appropriate funding in order to create professional development schools. Learning laboratories like professional development schools allow student teachers to experience real-life situations that are not easily taught in a textbook. Professional development schools lead to better, well-prepared teachers who are willing to stay in the profession longer. The most distressing part of a new teacher's job is realizing that the textbooks did not prepare her for the realities of the classroom. **The SBEC should be charged with creating the standards for these professional development schools to ensure that student teachers are meeting**

those standards of performance that will stimulate their success in the induction period.

Waiting for a teacher to experience the realities of today's classroom on her own may lead to misery and eventual departure from the profession.

Provisional Licensing Examination Recommendations

The ideal teacher licensure system has two critical levels. The first is the provisional license, which declares an individual is prepared to enter the classroom through the fulfillment of rigorous study and testing. The next part of that system proclaims that this two-year veteran has met the terms of that which constitutes a professional educator through performance-based assessments. The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) is moving in the right direction by creating standards for the teaching profession. These new assessment standards will eventually meet the criteria dealing with professional teaching standards as described in the conceptual framework.

Nevertheless, the state legislature should enact a law that requires the SBEC to create a tiered system of teacher licensure. This system will separate the novice teacher from the veteran teacher and may create incentives for teachers to receive better compensation and benefits by demonstrating their knowledge and skills inside the classroom. The current licensure system does not ensure that only qualified teachers remain in the classroom. It allows any licensed teacher to renew his or her license after participating in 150 clock hours of continuing professional education credit. A provisional license expresses to the public that while a teacher may have fulfilled the initial requirements of the state, he must now demonstrate in the classroom that his students are learning and achieving.

Therefore, the provisional licensed teacher, after meeting the standards of a professional license, now may be compensated and rewarded appropriately.

Induction Period Recommendations

After a teacher has received a provisional license and she enters the classroom, the system should continue to monitor her through a mentor program, interactive portfolios, and performance-based assessments. Individuals who do not meet the requirements of a professional license should not be allowed to teach in the Texas public school system. If the state of Texas and the SBEC were to raise the standards of the profession by creating a two-tiered system as described above, the public would be more inclined to compensate teachers more; thereby increasing the likelihood that teachers would stay in the profession longer and student learning would improve.

The SBEC should continue piloting the Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS). This research-based system is a positive effort by the SBEC to support new teachers through performance-based assessments and a mentor teacher program. Frankly, this is the best opportunity for enhancing the teaching profession and creating systems of support for new educators.

Renewal Process Recommendations

Of the five ideal type categories, the renewal process is Texas' weakest category. The ideal type licensure system requires that teachers develop a professional development plan based on the needs of the students and reviewed by a committee of their peers. The 150 clock hour requirement by the state of Texas does none of that. The current requirement only

ensures that teachers are attending continuing professional education training opportunities. It does not seek to guarantee that teachers are actually improving and students are actually learning.

If administrators can be required to meet those standards of renewal, why are teachers not held to that same quality standard? **A peer assistance²⁸ committee can help teachers find the right types of learning opportunities that will enhance their skills in the classroom and eventually, the skills of their students.** This by no means qualifies a peer assistance committee to impede an educator's right to a fair renewal process. **The sole authority of granting renewals should still be left to the SBEC. The peer assistance committee should only serve as a resource for teachers. The SBEC should then develop incentives for teachers to change their teaching practices and affect student performance.**

In 1999, a task force was convened by the SBEC to design criteria for approving staff development providers for Texas. The Task Force on Certificate Renewal conducted pilot programs throughout the state and offered the SBEC several recommendations for improving certificate renewal. One of the most powerful lessons learned by the task force was that teachers have a need to reflect on their practice through peer dialogue (Task Force, 2000). Teachers must be given the freedom to grow through professional discourse and continuous learning opportunities. Creating a renewal process as identified in the conceptual framework accomplishes those needs.

²⁸ "Peer review" has been associated with teacher unions. For this reason, and since Texas is a non-union state, the term "peer assistance" can achieve the same objectives and be politically more palatable.

Table 6.2 outlines the overall conclusions using a typical grading scale still found in most schools today (A = excellent, B = good, C = average, D = needs vast improvement, and F = failing). A summary of the recommendations is also outlined in the table.

Future Research

Students of public administration or education have multiple choices conducting research on the topic of teacher licensure systems. There are opportunities to expand on this study by concentrating on one of the categories outlined in the conceptual framework and conducting a research design that evaluates the performance of teachers at each stage of the continuum. Another study may involve researching the attitudes of program directors of teacher preparation or agency personnel that administer such programs. A survey of teachers may shed light on teacher attitudes concerning the knowledge and skills they acquired through a teacher preparation program. Those findings can further compare what a teacher know as she enters the classroom and what she needs to know and be able to do to be an effective teacher in today's classroom.

Other more formal studies can explain the correlation between teacher knowledge and skill and student performance. These types of experimental designs, however, are more difficult to execute because they may be detrimental to student learning capacities in the control or experimental group. Such studies are unethical and not recommended. One last idea for future research is a predictive study that creates models that predict teacher performance in the future based on current initiatives on teacher licensure.

Summary

The Texas Center for Educational Research released a study in November 2000, prepared for the Texas State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) as part of the Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS) Initiative. In its report, the Center estimated that Texas is losing between \$300 million and \$2.1 billion per year due to teacher turnover (Texas Center, 2000: 16). The most recent data showed that 19 percent of new teachers were leaving the profession after just one year. The report illustrated teacher turnover costs using several models. The report concluded that teacher turnover could be reduced by teacher support programs, resources for teachers, and advanced certification opportunities (Texas Center, 2000: 16).

Although the state of Texas is formulating new procedures for educator certification, the current system is weak and lacks the appropriate resources teachers need to accomplish the task of quality teaching and learning. The ideal type described in this study is a practical starting point for reflection among state officials and supporters of public education to find ways to improve the teacher licensure system in Texas.

Table 6.2 Overall Conclusions and Summary of Recommendations

Ideal Type Category	Grade based on the Practical Ideal Type	Summary of Recommendations
Pre-service Education	B+	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The state legislature needs to ensure that individuals who aspire to become teachers hold a liberal arts degree. 2. The SBEC should raise standards by requiring individuals to hold a liberal arts degree in the content area in which they wish to receive a teacher license.
Internship	C	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The state should mandate all colleges and universities to form cohort groups and professional discourse communities with local schools, enabling student teachers the opportunity to interact with professionals in a learning environment. 4. The state should also support teacher preparation programs through appropriate funding in order to create professional development schools.
Provisional Licensing Examination	C	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. The state legislature should enact a law that requires the SBEC to create a tiered system of teacher licensure. A provisional license expresses to the public that while a teacher may have fulfilled the initial requirements of the state, he or she must now demonstrate in the classroom that their students are learning and achieving.
Induction Period	D	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. If the state of Texas and the SBEC were to raise the standards of the profession by creating a two-tiered system as described in the current literature, the public would be more inclined to compensate teachers more; thereby increasing the likelihood that teachers would stay in the profession longer and student learning would improve. The SBEC should continue piloting the Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS).
Renewal Process	F	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. A peer assistance committee can help teachers find the right types of learning opportunities that will enhance their skills in the classroom and eventually, the skills of their students. The peer assistance committee should only serve as a resource for teachers. 8. The SBEC should then develop incentives for teachers to change their teaching practice and affect student performance.

Appendices

Appendix A: Code Sheet for Document Analysis

Appendix B: Texas Education Code Chapter 21: Educators

Appendix C: Texas Administrative Code Title 19, Part 7: State Board for Educator Certification

Appendix D: Focused Interview Questions

Appendix E: Interview Responses

APPENDIX A

Code Sheet for Document Analysis

Ideal Type Categories	Documents	Findings
Pre-service Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content Knowledge • Liberal Arts Education • Pedagogy 	Texas Education Code Chapter 21: Educators Texas Administrative Code, Title 19	____ Yes ____ No ____ Yes ____ No ____ Yes ____ No
Internship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field-based Learning • Cohort groups and Professional Discourse Communities • Professional Development Schools 	Texas Education Code Chapter 21: Educators Texas Administrative Code, Title 19	____ Yes ____ No ____ Yes ____ No ____ Yes ____ No
Provisional Licensing Examination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Teaching Standards • Knowledge and Skills 	Texas Education Code Chapter 21: Educators Texas Administrative Code, Title 19 ExCET Study Guides and Preparation Manuals	____ Yes ____ No ____ Yes ____ No
Induction Period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor Program • Interactive Portfolios • Performance-based Assessment • Professional Licensing 	Texas Administrative Code, Title 19 Texas Beginning Educator Support System: Program Standards (www.sbec.state.tx.us)	____ Yes ____ No ____ Yes ____ No ____ Yes ____ No ____ Yes ____ No
Renewal Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Development Plan • Peer Review • Student Achievement 	Texas Administrative Code, Title 19 Certificate Renewal Requirement Information (www.sbec.state.tx.us)	____ Yes ____ No ____ Yes ____ No ____ Yes ____ No

APPENDIX B

Texas Education Code Chapter 21: Educators

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 21.003. Certification Required

(a) A person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, or counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B.

(b) A person may not be employed by a school district as an audiologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, physician, nurse, school psychologist, associate school psychologist, social worker, or speech language pathologist unless the person is licensed by the state agency that licenses that profession. A person may perform specific services within those professions for a school district only if the person holds the appropriate credential from the appropriate state agency.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

SUBCHAPTER B. CERTIFICATION OF EDUCATORS

§ 21.031. Purpose

(a) The State Board for Educator Certification is established to recognize public school educators as professionals and to grant educators the authority to govern the standards of their profession. The board shall regulate and oversee all aspects of the certification, continuing education, and standards of conduct of public school educators.

(b) In proposing rules under this subchapter, the board shall ensure that all candidates for certification or renewal of certification demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to improve the performance of the diverse student population of this state.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

§ 21.032. Definition

In this subchapter, "board" means the State Board for Educator Certification.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

§ 21.033. State Board for Educator Certification

(a) The State Board for Educator Certification is composed of 15 members. The commissioner of education shall appoint an employee of the agency to represent the commissioner as a nonvoting member. The commissioner of higher education shall appoint an employee of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to represent the commissioner as a nonvoting member. The governor shall appoint a dean of a college of education in this state as a nonvoting member. The remaining 12 members are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate, as follows:

- (1) four members must be teachers employed in public schools;
- (2) two members must be public school administrators;
- (3) one member must be a public school counselor; and
- (4) five members must be citizens, three of whom are not and have not, in the five years preceding appointment, been employed by a public school district or by an educator preparation program in an institution of higher education and two of whom are not and have not been employed by a public school district or by an educator preparation program in an institution of higher education.

(b) Appointments to the board shall be made without regard to the race, color, disability, sex, religion, age, or national origin of the person appointed.

(c) A board member is immune from civil suit for any act performed in good faith in the execution of duties as a board member.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1174, § 1, eff. June 20, 1997.

§ 21.036. Officers

The board shall elect one of its members to serve as presiding officer for a term of two years. The presiding officer is entitled to vote on all matters before the board. The board may elect other officers from among its membership.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1174, § 2, eff. June 20, 1997.

§ 21.040. General Powers and Duties of Board

The board shall:

- (1) supervise the executive director's performance;
- (2) approve an operating budget for the board and make a request for appropriations;
- (3) appoint the members of any advisory committee to the board;
- (4) for each class of educator certificate, appoint an advisory committee composed of members of that class to recommend standards for that class to the board;
- (5) provide to its members and employees, as often as necessary, information regarding their qualifications for office or employment under this chapter and their responsibilities under applicable laws relating to standards of conduct for state officers or employees;
- (6) develop and implement policies that clearly define the respective responsibilities of the board and the board's staff;
- (7) file annually with the governor and the presiding officer of each house of the legislature a complete and detailed written report, in the form and within the time provided by the General Appropriations Act, accounting for all funds received and disbursed by the board during the preceding fiscal year; and
- (8) execute interagency contracts to perform routine administrative functions.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

§ 21.041. Rules; Fees

(a) The board may adopt rules as necessary for its own procedures.

(b) The board shall propose rules that:

- (1) provide for the regulation of educators and the general administration of this subchapter in a manner consistent with this subchapter;
- (2) specify the classes of educator certificates to be issued, including emergency certificates;
- (3) specify the period for which each class of educator certificate is valid;
- (4) specify the requirements for the issuance and renewal of an educator certificate;
- (5) provide for the issuance of an educator certificate to a person who holds a similar certificate issued by another state or foreign country, subject to Section 21.052;
- (6) provide for special or restricted certification of educators, including certification of instructors of American Sign Language;
- (7) provide for disciplinary proceedings, including the suspension or revocation of an educator certificate, as provided by Chapter 2001, Government Code;
- (8) provide for the adoption, amendment, and enforcement of an educator's code of ethics;
- (9) provide for continuing education requirements; and
- (10) provide for certification of persons performing appraisals under Subchapter H.

(c) The board shall propose a rule adopting a fee for the issuance and maintenance of an educator certificate that is adequate to cover the cost of administration of this subchapter.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

§ 21.042. Approval of Rules

The State Board for Educator Certification must submit a written copy of each rule it proposes to adopt to the State Board of Education for review. The State Board of Education may reject a proposed rule by a vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the board present and voting. If the State Board of Education fails to reject a proposal before the 90th day after the date on which it receives the proposal, the proposal takes effect as a rule of the State Board for Educator Certification as provided by Chapter 2001, Government Code. The State Board of Education may not modify a rule proposed by the State Board for Educator Certification.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

§ 21.044. Educator Preparation

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

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

§ 21.045. Accountability System for Educator Preparation Programs

(a) The board shall propose rules establishing standards to govern the approval and continuing accountability of all educator preparation programs based on information that is disaggregated with respect to sex and ethnicity and that includes:

- (1) results of the certification examinations prescribed under Section 21.048(a); and
- (2) performance based on the appraisal system for beginning teachers adopted by the board.

(b) Each educator preparation program shall submit data elements as required by the board for an annual performance report to ensure access and equity. At a minimum, the annual report must contain the performance data from Subsection (a) and the following information, disaggregated by sex and ethnicity:

- (1) the number of candidates who apply;
- (2) the number of candidates admitted;
- (3) the number of candidates retained;
- (4) the number of candidates completing the program;
- (5) the number of candidates employed in the profession after completing the program; and
- (6) the number of candidates retained in the profession.

(c) The board shall propose rules establishing performance standards for the Accountability System for Educator Preparation for accrediting educator preparation programs. At a minimum, performance standards must be based on Subsection (a). The board shall propose rules for the sanction of educator preparation programs and shall annually review the accreditation status of each educator preparation program.

(d) The executive director of the board shall appoint an oversight team of educators to make recommendations and provide assistance to educator preparation programs that do not meet accreditation standards. If, after one year, an educator preparation program has not fulfilled the recommendations of the oversight team, the executive director shall appoint a person to administer and manage the operations of the program. If the program does not improve after two years, the board shall revoke the approval of the program to prepare educators for state certification.

(e) Expired.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

§ 21.047. Centers for Professional Development of Teachers

(a) The board may develop the process for the establishment of centers for professional development through institutions of higher education for the purpose of integrating technology and innovative teaching practices in the preservice and staff development training of public school teachers and administrators. An institution of higher education with a teacher education program may develop a center through a collaborative process involving public schools, regional education service centers, and other entities or businesses. A center may contract with other entities to develop materials and provide training.

(b) On application by a center, the board shall make grants to the center for its programs from funds derived from gifts, grants, and legislative appropriations for that purpose. The board shall award the grants on a competitive basis according to requirements established by the board rules.

(c) A center may develop and implement a comprehensive field-based educator preparation program to supplement the internship hours required in Section 21.050. This comprehensive field-based teacher program must:

(1) be designed on the basis of current research into state-of-the-art teaching practices, curriculum theory and application, evaluation of student outcomes, and the effective application of technology; and

(2) have rigorous internal and external evaluation procedures that focus on content, delivery systems, and teacher and student outcomes.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

§ 21.048. Certification Examinations

(a) The board shall propose rules prescribing comprehensive examinations for each class of certificate issued by the board.

(b) The board may not administer a written examination to determine the competence or level of performance of an educator who has a hearing impairment unless the examination has been field tested to determine its appropriateness, reliability, and validity as applied to, and minimum acceptable performance scores for, persons with hearing impairments.

(c) An educator who has a hearing impairment is exempt from taking a written examination for a period ending on the first anniversary of the date on which the board determines, on the basis of appropriate field tests, that the examination complies with the standards specified in Subsection (b). On application to the board, the board shall issue a temporary exemption certificate to a person entitled to an exemption under this subsection.

(d) In this section:

(1) "Hearing impairment" means a hearing impairment so severe that the person cannot process linguistic information with or without amplification.

(2) "Reliability" means the extent to which an experiment, test, or measuring procedure yields the same results on repeated trials.

(3) "Validity" means being:

(A) well-grounded or justifiable;

(B) relevant and meaningful;

(C) correctly derived from premises or inferences; and

(D) supported by objective truth or generally accepted authority.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

§ 21.049. Alternative Certification

To provide a continuing additional source of qualified educators, the board shall propose rules providing for educator certification programs as an alternative to traditional educator preparation programs. The rules may not provide that a person may be certified under this

section only if there is a demonstrated shortage of educators in a school district or subject area.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

§ 21.050. Academic Degree Required for Teaching Certificate; Internship

(a) A person who applies for a teaching certificate for which board rules require a bachelor's degree must possess a bachelor's degree received with an academic major or interdisciplinary academic major, including reading, other than education, that is related to the curriculum as prescribed under Subchapter A, Chapter 28.

(b) The board may not require more than 18 semester credit hours of education courses at the baccalaureate level for the granting of a teaching certificate. The board shall provide for a minimum number of semester credit hours of internship to be included in the hours needed for certification. The board may propose rules requiring additional credit hours for certification in bilingual education, English as a second language, early childhood education, or special education.

(c) A person who receives a bachelor's degree required for a teaching certificate on the basis of higher education coursework completed while receiving an exemption from tuition and fees under Section 54.214 and who has at least two school years of classroom working experience as an educational aide may not be required to perform any internship consisting of student teaching to receive a teaching certificate.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 524, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

§ 21.051. Options for Field Experience and Internships

The board shall propose rules providing flexible options for persons for any field experience or internship required for certification.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

§ 21.052. Certification of Educators From Outside the State

(a) The board may issue a certificate to an educator who:

(1) holds:

(A) a degree issued by an institution accredited by a regional accrediting agency or group that is recognized by a nationally recognized accreditation board; or

(B) a degree issued by an institution located in a foreign country, if the degree is equivalent to a degree described by Paragraph (A);

(2) holds an appropriate certificate or other credential issued by another state or country; and

(3) performs satisfactorily on the examination prescribed under Section 21.048.

(b) For purposes of Subsection (a)(2), a person is considered to hold a certificate or other credential if the credential is not valid solely because it has expired.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

§ 21.053. Presentation and Recording of Certificates

(a) A person who desires to teach in a public school shall present the person's certificate for filing with the employing district before the person's contract with the board of trustees of the district is binding.

(b) An educator who does not hold a valid certificate may not be paid for teaching or work done before the effective date of issuance of a valid certificate.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

§ 21.054. Continuing Education

(a) The board shall propose rules establishing a process for identifying continuing education courses and programs that fulfill educators' continuing education requirements.

(b) Continuing education for principals must be based on an individual assessment of the knowledge, skills, and proficiencies necessary to perform successfully as a principal, as identified in Section 21.046. An individualized professional growth plan shall be developed as a result of the assessment and shall be used exclusively for professional growth purposes. The assessment results and the growth plan may only be released with the approval of the principal assessed. Each certified principal shall participate in the assessment process and professional growth activities at least once every five years.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

§ 21.055. School District Teaching Permit

(a) As provided by this section, a school district may issue a school district teaching permit and employ as a teacher a person who does not hold a teaching certificate issued by the board.

(b) To be eligible for a school district teaching permit under this section, a person must hold a baccalaureate degree. This subsection does not apply to a person who will teach only career and technology education.

(c) Promptly after employing a person under this section, a school district shall send to the commissioner a written statement identifying the person, the person's qualifications as a teacher, and the subject or class the person will teach. The person may teach the subject or class pending action by the commissioner.

(d) Not later than the 30th day after the date the commissioner receives the statement under Subsection (c), the commissioner may inform the district in writing that the commissioner finds the person is not qualified to teach. The person may not teach if the commissioner finds the person is not qualified. If the commissioner fails to act within the time prescribed by this subsection, the district may issue to the person a school district teaching permit and the person may teach the subject or class identified in the statement.

(e) A person authorized to teach under this section may not teach in another school district unless that district complies with this section. A school district teaching permit remains valid unless the district issuing the permit revokes it for cause.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

§ 21.056. Additional Certification

The board by rule shall provide for a certified educator to qualify for additional certification to teach at a grade level or in a subject area not covered by the educator's certificate upon satisfactory completion of an examination or other assessment of the educator's qualification.

Added by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1356, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

APPENDIX C

Texas Administrative Code Title 19, Part 7: State Board for Educator Certification

The following rules were reviewed for the study. For full text see www.sbec.state.us.tx.

Chapter 227 Provisions for Educator Preparation Students

Rule §227.10 Admission Criteria

Chapter 228 Requirements for Educator Preparation Programs

Rule §228.20 Governance, Design, and Delivery of Educator Preparation Programs

Rule §228.30 Educator Preparation Curriculum

Rule §228.40 Assessment and Evaluation of Candidate for Certification and Program Improvement

Chapter 229 Accountability System for Educator Preparation

Rule §229.30 The Accreditation Process

Rule §229.40 Reporting Requirements

Chapter 230 Professional Educator Preparation and Certification

Rule §230.50 Educator Assessment

Rule §230.191 Preparation Required in All Programs

Rule §230.413 General Requirements

Rule §230.482 Specific Requirements for Standard Certificates and Endorsements

Rule §230.481 General Provisions

Rule §230.610 Induction Program for Beginning Teachers

Chapter 232 General Requirements Applicable to all Certificates Issued

Rule §232.800 General Provisions

Rule §232.850 Number and Content of Required Continuing Professional Education Hours

APPENDIX D

Focused Interview Questions

Ideal Type Categories	Questions
Pre-service Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content Knowledge • Liberal Arts Education • Pedagogy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Does the state require all applicants for teacher certification to have received a liberal arts degree? If not, what is the requirement? 2) How many content and pedagogy courses are required by the state to receive a teaching certificate in a certain area? (If they vary, just give the requirements for secondary mathematics as an example.)
Internship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field-based Learning • Cohort groups and Professional Discourse Communities • Professional Development Schools 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To what extent does the law require student teachers to have field-based learning opportunities through cohort groups and professional discourse communities? 2) Has the state established professional development schools that serve as laboratories for learning for student teachers? If not, do any universities in the state sponsor such schools on their own?
Provisional Licensing Examination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Teaching Standards • Knowledge and Skills 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Is the licensing exam in Texas based on professional teaching standards set by the State Board of Education, or some other professional board? If not standards, what is the test based on? 2) To what extent is the licensing exam in Texas based on the knowledge and skills that a professional educator needs to perform his/her job well?
Induction Period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor Program • Interactive Portfolios • Performance-based Assessment • Professional Licensing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Does the Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS) serve to move beginning educators from provisional licensing to professional licensing? If not, what purpose does the TxBESS serve, and can beginning teachers lose their license based on their performance during this period? 2) To what extent is the TxBESS a performance-based assessment? Are portfolios used as part of the assessments?
Renewal Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Development Plan • Peer Review • Student Achievement 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Does the renewal process require that educators follow a professional development plan created in concert with their supervisor or mentor? 2) To what extent is peer review used and/or encouraged? 3) Does the renewal process take student achievement in to account? If not student achievement, what is the process based on?

APPENDIX E

Interview Responses

Pre-service Education

Laura Mecanick

Certification Specialist

The University of Texas at Austin

Q1: Does the state require all applicants for teacher certification to have received a liberal arts degree? If not, what is the requirement?)

The state does not require all applicants for teacher certification to have received a liberal arts degree. An applicant for teacher certification would have to have a Bachelors degree but it could be in many different things depending on what level (elementary or secondary) and what subject area they want to teach.

Q2: How many content and pedagogy courses are required by the state to receive a teaching certificate in a certain area?

The basic requirement is 18 hours of professional education or pedagogy courses. The number of content courses would vary depending on whether a person wanted to be certified in elementary or secondary education and whether or not they already have a degree when they begin pursuing their teaching certificate. I will use the example of secondary history because we do not work closely with science and math education students in this office. Those areas are handled by a division of The Natural Sciences College here at UT. For secondary history, a person would have to have 24 hours of History (12 or which must be upper-division). If however, they were pursuing their initial degree while working on their teacher certification, they would need another teaching field to go along with the history. They would need approximately 24 hours in that field also. If they are a postbaccalaureate student pursuing secondary certification, they would only need one teaching field in which case they could choose only history and take the 24 hours.

Internship

Dr. Paul Paese

Associate Dean and Director of the Office of Teacher Education and Field Experiences
Southwest Texas State University

Q1: To what extent does the law require student teachers to have field-based learning through cohort groups and professional discourse communities?

The answer to #1 is no.

Q2: Has the state established professional development schools that serve as laboratories for learning for student teachers? If not, do any universities in the state sponsor such schools on their own?

The answer to #2 is that years ago there was a grant to support PDS's during teacher preparation. Most of the PDS's are prior to student teaching, but some include student teachers. The majority of teacher preparation programs in Texas have something based on the PDS model.

Provisional Licensing Examination

Marilyn Cook

Office of Accountability

Texas State Board for Educator Certification

Q1: Is the licensing exam in Texas based on professional teaching standards set by the State Board of Education, or some other professional board? If not standards, what is the test based on?

The current tests in the Examination for the Certification of Educators in Texas (ExCET) program have a test framework that assesses important aspects of the entry-level educator's job, including the higher-order thinking skills that are related to a variety of real-world tasks that educators face in the practice of teaching. The content of the tests reflects the curriculum of public school courses included in the Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 75 and educational practice as defined by Texas educators. The ExCET tests are designed to assess the professional knowledge and skills of entry-level educators seeking certification to practice in Texas public schools.

The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) is instituting a standards-based system of certifying teachers. SBEC spent almost two years defining the certification levels and subject area certificates that would be issued under the new certificate structure, Early Childhood – Grade 4; Grades 4-8; and Grades 8-12. Committees of Texas educators drawn from across the state have been involved in the development of new certification standards.

New certification standards are grounded in the state-mandated curriculum for students, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) to ensure that beginning teachers possess sufficient knowledge and skills to assist students in being successful, especially in light of the new, more rigorous student assessments that are being developed. Rather than describing certification standards in terms of semester credit hour-based coursework that must be completed, the standards define what a beginning educator should know (knowledge) and be able to do (skills) for each certification level and content area. SBEC staff has been working with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to assist university-based programs with the transition to the standards-based system.

Once approved by the Board, the new certification standards form the basis for new Examinations for the Certification of Educators in Texas (ExCETs). These new certification examinations will require beginning teachers to know more about the developmental

characteristics of children they will teach and demonstrate a high level of knowledge in the subject areas that they will teach.

The first new ExCETs will be administered in fall 2002. However, this initiative will take several years to fully implement and will impact all areas of Texas education—from the 91 educator preparation programs currently approved to train educators to the almost 7,000 Texas public school campuses. Texas students, educators, parents, and the general public will benefit from this standards-based system, which is focused on enhancing the quality of Texas educators and aligning the Texas system of education from kindergarten to college.

Q2: To what extent is the licensing exam in Texas based on the knowledge and skills that a professional educator needs to perform his/her job well?

Committees of Texas educators and interested citizens are guiding the development of the new ExCET tests by participating in each stage of the test development process. Various strategies are employed throughout the development process to ensure that the content of the tests is defined accurately, appropriately, and without bias. The steps in the test development process involve the following major activities:

Develop Standards—Committees recommend what the beginning educator should know and be able to do. To ensure vertical alignment of standards across the range of instructional levels, individuals with expertise in early childhood, elementary, middle, or high school meet jointly to articulate the critical knowledge and skills for a particular content area.

Participants begin their dialogue using a “clean slate” approach with the TEKS as the focal point. Draft standards are written to both incorporate and expand upon the TEKS content to ensure that all beginning educators possess the appropriate level of both knowledge and skills to successfully instruct students.

Review Standards—Committees review and revise the draft standards. The revised draft standards are placed on the agency web site and submitted to the State Board of Education (SBOE) for further review and comment. Comments received are incorporated, as appropriate, into the final draft of the standards presented to the SBEC Board for discussion and final approval.

Develop Test Frameworks—Committees review and revise draft test frameworks that are based on the approved standards. These frameworks outline the specific competencies that will be measured on the new ExCET tests and represent the critical components of the standards that can be measured with either a pencil and paper-based or computer-administered examination, as appropriate. Test frameworks will not be finalized until after the standards are approved and the job analysis/content validation survey (see below) is complete.

Conduct Job Analysis/Content Validation Surveys—A representative sample of Texas educators who practice in or prepare individuals for each of the fields for which an educator certificate has been proposed are surveyed to determine the relative job importance of each competency outlined in the test framework for that content area. Test frameworks are revised as needed following an analysis of the survey responses. The job analysis survey is a

recognized process for helping ensure that test materials for licensure and certification directly relate to the job for which tests are being developed.

Develop and Review New Test Items—The test contractor develops test questions designed to measure the competencies described in the test framework. Committees review the items for appropriateness of content and difficulty, clarity, alignment with the competencies, and potential ethnic, gender, and regional bias.

Conduct Pilot Test of New Test Items—All of the newly developed test items that are acceptable to the item review committees are then administered to an appropriate sample of Texas educators.

Review Pilot Test Data—Committees review all of the statistical data gathered from the pilot tests to ensure that the test items are statistically valid, reliable, and free from bias.

Develop and Administer New ExCET Tests—New ExCET tests are then constructed to reflect the competencies and administered to candidates for certification.

Induction Period

Dr. Diane Hess

Program Administrator

Texas State Board for Educator Certification

Q1: Is the licensing exam in Texas based on professional teaching standards set by the State Board of Education, or some other professional board? If not standards, what is the test based on?

No, TxBESS is not a component in the licensing of teachers. We have no "provisional" licenses for beginning teachers, only the Standard Certificate. The main purpose of TxBESS is to provide support and professional growth for the beginning teacher by using a framework for teaching based on Charlotte Danielson's work.

Q2: To what extent is the licensing exam in Texas based on the knowledge and skills that a professional educator needs to perform his/her job well?

Some aspects of TxBESS may resemble a portfolio because multiple evidences of proficiency are submitted (e.g., student records, parent communications, lesson plans, observations).

Renewal Process

Dr. Susan Hetzler

Program Administrator

Texas State Board for Educator Certification

Q1: Does the renewal process require that educators follow a professional development plan created in concert with their supervisor or mentor?

No, for teachers, counselors, diagnosticians, resource specialists, master teachers, etc. Yes, for principals as part of the assessment process they are required to complete once every five years. Not really for superintendents, except new supers are required to have a mentor during their first/second year on the job. We need to be careful with this one because you have used the term educators and the rules are more specific with regard to different groups of educators. Note: An exception are those beginning teachers participating in TxBESS and experimenting with TAP, the activity profile that's used in a formative way to provide them with the mentor and assistance that they need to survive those first couple of years teaching so they'll be more likely to stay in the profession. This involves both mentoring and a PDP.

Q2: To what extent is peer review used and/or encouraged?

Not required for certification renewal purposes, unless you're talking about principals and superintendents. Imbedded in the rules for those administrators you'll find peer review as part of that process, especially the principal renewal, which requires this every five years as part of the assessment they're required to do and, the mentoring for the new supers. While we would all encourage this kind of activity, it is not required of most folks.

Q3: Does the renewal process take student achievement in to account? If not student achievement, what is the process based on?

No. Individual needs, district/campus priorities, self-improvement, additional knowledge...a variety of things and this varies significantly across the state. In some cases, renewal is driven by improvement based on PDAS results and in other cases entirely on the individual needs of the educator identified by the individual, group, team of teachers, etc. With principals, the professional development plan is based on the individual's performance assessment and goals are set from that point. Teachers in need of improvement whether its questioning techniques or managing student behavior or working with parents that can be determined by the individual, the campus, or the district. In still other cases, it might be the individual adding additional certification areas/advanced level preparation and degree that drives what happens. But, for certification renewal purposes, almost anything/everything that an individual does can be counted as long as the hours earned are from an approved Continuing Professional Education (CPE) provider registered with SBEC.

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