

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM

Angelo State University

San Angelo, Texas

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Introduction

- 4.1 Vision and Mission Statements**
- 4.2 Philosophy, Purpose and Goals**
- 4.3 Knowledge Base**
- 4.4 Candidate Proficiencies Alignment**
- 4.5 Assessment System**

Introduction:

Angelo State University and its Educator Preparation Programs

Angelo State University is a senior regional educational institution meeting the local and far-reaching needs of learners. ASU is a dynamic institution of higher education long recognized for its strong academic programs, its technological sophistication and its nurturing environment, all of which help students reach their full potential. Many students enrolled at Angelo State are first-generation college attendees.

As a comprehensive university, Angelo State aims to “touch tomorrow” in the lives of students, in the growth of their communities, whether local or global, and in the pursuit of the common good of society. ASU provides a full range of educational opportunities that prepares students for successful careers and for entry into graduate and professional schools.

Academically, the university is organized with six colleges – Business, Education, Liberal and Fine Arts, Sciences, Nursing and Allied Health, and Graduate Studies. The College of Education, for example, began as a department. It then progressed in focus and size to the School of Education. Most recently, it became the College of Education, with departments of Teacher Education, Curriculum and Instruction, and Kinesiology. These changes are indicative of the University's continuing emphasis on the importance of Educator Preparation and its support of and commitment to achieving NCATE accreditation.

Not only does Angelo State provide excellent academic preparation for students but also excellent facilities for learning and living to students both on and off campus. A substantial number of students in the Educator Preparation Programs are non-traditional in age, experiences, background, and need. Additionally, ASU has the financial resources to help its students pursue education. For example, through the Carr

Academic Scholarship Program, ASU provides scholarships for one in every six ASU students, equaling a 3.3 million dollar amount annually.

Success at ASU, whether in the classroom, in student organizations, or on playing fields, translates into success in life. ASU graduates have headed major national corporations, played in Super Bowls, anchored national newscasts, served on Pulitzer Prize juries, held statewide political office, and made numerous contributions to their communities and society.

Angelo State has grown substantially since its initial role as San Angelo Junior College in 1928. In 1965, it became a four-year, baccalaureate granting institution, and in 1969, its name was changed to Angelo State University. In 2007, Angelo State became a member of the Texas Tech University System.

What then, is unique about the Angelo State University Educator Preparation Program? Candidates and other college students choose Angelo State for its vision, mission, academic programs, and dedication to success.

- The ASU educator candidate population reflects the demographics of West Texas and beyond. Substantial numbers of candidates represent first generation college students, non-native English speakers, diversity in heritage and culture, economic status, and geography.
- Faculty identified as Teacher Education Faculty, and other contributing university faculty combined, have hundreds of years of teaching, professional research, scholarly accomplishments, and service to the university, public schools, and the community at-large.
- The Educator Preparation Program is large enough to be comprehensive in its preparation of teachers and other school personnel, but small enough to reflect personal commitment on the part of the faculty to nurture and support the development of candidates while on their way to becoming education professionals. Approximately 30 percent of ASU graduates are Educator Preparation Program completers. This percentage climbs to 47 percent at the graduate level.
- Angelo State University has one of the largest private endowments for scholarship assistance for a university of its size in the United States, the Robert G. Carr and Nona K. Carr Foundation. Carr scholarships are awarded annually to one in every six ASU students, many of whom are in the Educator Preparation Program.
- Candidates who successfully complete the Educator Preparation Program are sought after by school districts for employment. They are highly qualified and well prepared to be effective teachers or other school professionals when they graduate from the university.

4.1 Vision and Mission Statements

Institution Vision Statement

The vision of Angelo State University is to educate a diverse student body to become intellectually and culturally prepared to thrive as responsible leaders in a changing world (proposed new, 2008). Angelo State is dedicated to “Touching tomorrow” for all who live and study at the university.

Unit Vision Statement

Preparing new teachers, education specialists, and other school personnel has long been a focus and tradition at Angelo State University. Building on the institution vision, the Educator Preparation Program faculty vision is to prepare:

A

New

Generation of

Educators to

Lead

Others toward lifelong learning.

Institution Mission Statement

The University communicates its mission as, “The mission of Angelo State University is to cultivate intellectual, scientific, artistic and economic literacy with a global perspective and an emphasis on collaborative leadership, adaptability to change, lifelong learning and personal responsibility” (adopted, 2008).

Educator Preparation Program Mission Statement

Consistent with the institutional mission, the Angelo State University faculty is committed to its mission of preparing professional education leaders who become reflective practitioners through:

- developing content knowledge, pedagogical skills and professional dispositions which lead to effective teaching.
- implementing defensible instructional decisions and technology applications.
- embracing active, engaged student-centered learning .

- teaching that is culturally relevant and responsive to the ever-changing developmental and educational needs of diverse students, families, and society in partnership with schools and communities.

It is from this vision and mission that the Educator Preparation Program faculty have developed and communicated the program philosophy, purpose, proficiencies and outcomes to candidates.

4.2 Philosophy, Purpose and Goals

The Angelo State University Educator Preparation Program's philosophy, purpose and goals build upon the vision and mission of the university and the program. The program philosophy connects the vision, mission, purpose, outcome goals and proficiencies for candidates.

The Educator Preparation Program is developmentally based and learner-centered. Candidates utilize knowledge of age appropriate expectations for students at the grade levels they teach. The program focuses on candidates making instructional decisions and analyzing the impact of these decisions on student learning. This focus represents a shift from a solely traditional teacher development model to a learner-centered model of educator preparation.

The program believes that candidates develop as reflective practitioners through opportunities to reflect on their actions and to complete a progression of learning experiences, which include:

- developing content knowledge, pedagogical skills and professional dispositions leading to effective teaching.
- implementing defensible instructional decisions and technology applications.
- embracing active, engaged student-centered learning .
- teaching that is culturally relevant and responsive to the ever-changing developmental and educational needs of diverse students, families, and society in partnership with schools and communities.

Elaboration of Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions Beliefs:

Each component of reflective practice is critical as an element of successful educator preparation and is also a part of a holistic view of teacher development. Further discussion and development of each of the above philosophical assertions now follows:

The program believes that candidates must be grounded in content knowledge. A thorough understanding of the content an individual will teach is a basic element required for effective teaching. The candidate achieves this knowledge through the study

of the appropriate content in education, science, and the arts. The candidate demonstrates this knowledge by achieving a standard of performance in each content area as assessed through course experiences, standardized tests, and other program specific measures of content knowledge throughout the Educator Preparation Program (EPP). Candidates use state standards delineating content knowledge and skills for schools. These standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills are used as guidelines for the development of instruction. Candidates know and are able to demonstrate students' progress toward appropriate learning outcomes as a result of instructional decision-making including the application of a variety of formative and summative evaluation measures.

The program believes that candidates must be thoroughly grounded in pedagogical skills that facilitate the creation of knowledge and learning by all students. Candidates substantiate their proficiency in pedagogy through study, practice, demonstration, and teaching and are assessed throughout their programs of study and through successful completion of the appropriate level of the TExES Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) exams.

Importantly, candidates acquire and exhibit a set of dispositions that are respectful of individual and cultural differences, committed to professional and ethical standards, and dedicated to life-long learning. These dispositions are practiced and mastered through the study of human growth and development, culturally relevant principles, and professional pedagogy. They are demonstrated through assessment and evaluation during multiple field placements throughout the educator preparation program. The program believes that candidates need to expand their own worldview to become enlightened in ways that promote strong mind, body, and spirit capable of responding to the diverse and ever-changing demands of life. Correspondingly, candidates must be able to respond to the diverse experiences and backgrounds of the students they teach so that the students can reach their full potential of becoming life-long learners and contributing members to society. These proficiencies are accomplished through candidate personal growth and development, through experiences with diverse faculty in coursework, and in progressive and diverse field experiences---all assessed at benchmark points in the preparation program.

The program believes that candidates must reflect upon and apply their experiences in planning, evidence-based instruction, and assessment to engage all students in learning. Candidates embrace the premise that all students can learn. Effective teaching and learning occurs when candidates are committed and dedicated to student success through reflection on their personal experiences and professional preparation. When responding to diverse developmental needs of students, candidates continue to develop as education professionals through their commitments to and assessment of professional dispositions during supervised field placements at diverse school campuses.

The program believes that candidates develop as student-centered practitioners, capable of assessing their own practice by analyzing their effect on student learning, noting where they were successful, where change is needed, and where new evidence-based practices should be incorporated for student success.

The Educator Preparation Program promotes a shift in thought and practice from a traditional teacher development model to a learner-centered model. Candidates are encouraged to utilize self-assessment and reflection throughout their program experiences to analyze the impact of their teaching on student success. A learner-centered focus is modeled and practiced during candidate planning and practica experiences and assessed during student teaching.

The program also embraces culturally responsive and relevant teaching. Candidates bring their own unique experiences to their preparation program and then are immersed in the diversity of the classrooms in which they teach. The preparation program practices culturally relevant teaching, described by Pang (2005) as

...an approach to instruction that responds to the socio-cultural context and seeks to integrate the cultural content of the learner in shaping an effective learning environment. Cultural content includes aspects such as experiences, knowledge, events, values, role models, perspectives, and issues that arise from the community. Cultural context refers to the behaviors, interaction patterns, historical experiences, and underlying expectations and values of students. Culturally literate teachers (and candidates) develop an insider perspective of a cultural community. They understand that cultural elements operate simultaneously and respond in congruence with their students. Culturally knowledgeable teachers (and candidates) are keen observers, understand the importance of context and can read nonverbal communication cues such as facial expressions or the hand gestures of students (2005, p. 337).

...As this description implies, culturally relevant teachers (and correspondingly candidates) must be observant and alert to the classroom behaviors and communications, verbal and nonverbal, of students. There is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach to culturally relevant teaching. Every student must be studied individually and stereotypes about a particular group discarded. ...Culturally relevant teaching only occurs when teachers are sensitive to cultural differences and when culture is naturally integrated into the curriculum, into instructional and assessment practices, and into classroom management. ...Creating culturally relevant teaching and effective classrooms is a process that involves virtually every aspect of educational practice. And, while the processes are challenging and sometimes frustrating, they are vital to the fullest development of all students of every micro-culture (Webb, Metha, and Jordan, 2007, pp. 224-6).

The Educator Preparation Program Purpose and Goals:

The over-arching purpose of the Educator Preparation Program is to prepare teacher candidates and other school-based professionals to become practitioners capable of reflecting upon the impact and results of their own practices, to become critical thinkers and decision-makers employing current knowledge and effective practices based on professional outcomes and proficiencies.

Candidate Outcomes and Proficiencies

Outcomes of the program, including specific candidate proficiencies, answer the question, “What do candidates in the Angelo State Educator Preparation Program look like when they reach program completion?” These proficiencies and outcomes describe what candidates know and understand and are able to do. They are introduced, practiced, developed, and applied during the Educator Preparation Program and are demonstrated at the completion of the program attesting to the overall professional development of the candidate as an educator. Candidates make the shift from a teacher development model to a learner-centered model to support the assertion that the teacher’s instructional decision-making significantly impacts student learning. Candidate proficiencies and outcomes are listed here.

OUTCOME 1:

As reflective practitioners, candidates will demonstrate their knowledge of the content of disciplines appropriately applied to the age and level of the students they teach to ensure the implementation of effective instruction and successful development of all students.

Specifically, candidates at Angelo State demonstrate these proficiencies:

- exhibit a strong working knowledge of subject matter which enables students to better understand patterns of thinking specific to a discipline.
- stay abreast of current knowledge and practice within the content areas, related disciplines and technology.
- design instruction appropriate for all students that reflects an understanding of relevant content and is based on continuous and appropriate assessment.
- know and understand the importance of the state content and performance standards as outlined in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), Texas State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC Content Standards); and SBEC Test Frameworks (TExES).

- know and understand the relevant content of the discipline being taught, including concepts, principles, relationships, methods of inquiry, and key issues.
- know how to plan lesson content and skills and implement instructional strategies that make connections within the discipline and across disciplines.
- know how to use varied activities and instructional groupings to engage students in instructional content and to meet instructional goals and objectives.
- know and understand how to engage students intellectually by teaching content in relevant and meaningful ways that promote all students' active and invested participation in the learning process.
- know how to develop and use a variety of formative and summative assessment tools consistently applied to instructional goals and outcomes, fairly administered, accurately measured, carefully interpreted, and effectively communicated.

OUTCOME 2:

As reflective practitioners, candidates will demonstrate their knowledge of pedagogical skills applied to the development of effective instruction of all students.

Specifically, candidates at Angelo State demonstrate these proficiencies:

- design curriculum to motivate students through active learning in supportive environments for optimal learning.
- monitor and manage student learning using appropriate assessments as an integral part of instruction, thus responding to the needs of all learners.
- select and use materials, technology, activities, space and other resources that are developmentally appropriate, that support instructional goals and objectives, and that are designed to engage student interest in meaningful learning.
- use verbal, nonverbal, and media techniques so that students explore ideas collaboratively, pose questions, and support one another in their learning.
- plan lessons that reflect an understanding of students' developmental characteristics and needs, using a variety of pedagogical techniques to convey information and teach skills.

- plan instructional experiences that progress sequentially and support stated instructional goals; are aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (the statewide P-12 curriculum), are clear, relevant, meaningful, age appropriate and able to be assessed.
- establish classroom rules and procedures to promote an organized and productive learning environment, to set appropriate behavior standards that communicate high and realistic expectations for students' behavior and to ensure that students understand both expectations and consequences of misbehavior.
- promote student learning by providing responsive instruction that makes use of effective communication techniques, instructional strategies that actively engage students in the learning process, and timely, high-quality feedback.

OUTCOME 3:

As reflective practitioners, candidates will demonstrate commitment to and performance of professional dispositions, appropriately applied in all aspects of personal and educational endeavors.

Specifically, candidates at Angelo State demonstrate these proficiencies:

Professionalism

- **Timeliness** is consistent in class, clinical experiences, and group work, appointments, completion of assignments.
- **Attendance** is consistent at class, clinical experiences, group meetings, appointments, student teaching and internships.
- **Appearance and dress** matches schools' dress standards and expectations when candidate are present in the schools.
- **Poise/attitude** reflects proactive planning, preparation, and engagement in classes and in the schools.
- **Initiative** is demonstrated by offering ideas and suggestions to others, setting goals for self-improvement, seeking advice and feedback, and independently searching for, creating, or modifying plans and materials.
- **Ethics** is demonstrated by maintaining confidentiality about EC-12 students and their families, following the Code of Ethics for Texas Educators, disclosing any unlawful activity upon application to and during the teacher education program that might adversely affect ability to obtain a teaching license, as well as passing criminal background checks and drug screening required by the school systems.

Teaching Qualities

- **Demonstrates organization** through student-centered planning, selection/preparation of materials, time management.
- **Demonstrates flexibility** in modifying ideas, materials, plans, lesson implementation, course assignments.
- **Values diversity** through choosing and creating inclusive materials, lessons, assessments, and creating classroom environments that are inviting for diverse students' participation and learning; and that provide equitable access to instruction.

Relationships with Others

- **Cooperates** with instructors/school personnel; resolves differences or misunderstandings respectfully and reflectively.
- **Responds productively and respectfully to feedback** from instructors, classroom teachers, mentors, and principals.
- **Establishes rapport** with EC-12 students and their families.
- **Collaborates** with peers, instructors, schools personnel and parents; shares responsibilities, ideas, materials.
- **Provides leadership** to peers, instructors, school personnel and parents; initiates, suggests, contributes.
- **Affirms** perspective and contributions of diverse students, teachers, families, instructors, and peers.

Professional Development

- **Engages in reflection** by using various forms of feedback about candidates' teaching effectiveness, including assessment data showing impact on EC-12 students' learning.
- **Engages in life-long learning** through reading, observing, assessing, and participating in organizations.
- **Promotes success for all students** through best practices, informative assessments, and inclusive environments.
- **Demonstrates involvement** with parents, families, school personnel, and community agencies on behalf of students.

(Adapted from the University of North Carolina, Charlotte)

OUTCOME 4:

As reflective practitioners, candidates will demonstrate ability to implement defensible instructional decisions and technology applications leading to effective teaching and learning.

Specifically, candidates at Angelo State demonstrate these proficiencies:

- plan instruction in accordance with the Texas State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC): Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities competencies, SBEC Educator Test Frameworks, and the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).
- integrate technology in teaching and learning as defined in the State Board for Educator Certification Technology Standards for Beginning Teachers.
- adapt instruction to respond to diverse students' abilities, needs, and interests.
- manage and monitor student learning using appropriate assessments and adjusting instruction accordingly.
- reflect on the impact of teaching actions adjusting instructional strategies for the success of all students.
- select materials, technology, activities, and space that are developmentally appropriate and designed to engage student interest in learning.
- encourage learners to work independently and cooperatively in a positive and stimulating learning climate fueled by self-discipline and motivation.
- manage the learning environment effectively so that optimal learning occurs.
- select and organize topics recognizing the dynamic nature of knowledge so students make clear connections between what is taught in the classroom and what they experience outside the classroom.
- create an environment in which learners work cooperatively and purposefully using a variety of resources to understand themselves, their immediate community, and the global society in which they live.
- think critically, solve problems, reflect on teaching practice, demonstrating success through a variety of roles when teaching.
- demonstrate a commitment to learn, improve the profession, maintain professional ethics and personal integrity, and share responsibility for the result of student learning with all members of the learning community.
- identify and use group processes to make decisions and solve problems, as a member of a collaborative educational team.

OUTCOME 5:

As reflective practitioners, candidates will embrace active, engaged, student-centered learning.

Specifically, candidates at Angelo State demonstrate these

proficiencies:

- apply knowledge of characteristics of students' age group, students' varied approaches to learning, students' skills and knowledge, students' interests and cultural heritage to develop effective instruction.
- encourage students to use all of their individual skills and talents.
- collaborate with colleagues to adapt instruction and integrate instructional strategies responsive to the diverse needs, abilities, and interests of individual students.
- plan, implement, and assess instruction using technology and other resources.
- respond to the needs of all learners by using assessment as an integral component of instruction.
- have a vision for the destination of learning, but encourage students to set individual goals and to plan how to reach learning outcomes.
- create an environment in which learners work cooperatively and purposefully using a variety of resources to understand themselves, their immediate community, and the global society in which they live.
- develop instructional goals and objectives that reflect different types of student learning and skills.
- purposefully consider varied features of instruction to maximize student engagement and the development of thinking and problem solving skills.
- analyze the results of assessments to aid in determining students' strengths and needs.
- recognize the impact of candidate-student interactions and interactions among students on classroom climate, student learning, and development.
- is sensitive to students' emotional needs and utilizes a variety of interaction strategies to address those needs.
- communicate commitment to student-centered learning to families.
- know and use community resources, school services, and laws relating to teacher responsibilities and student rights.
- create an environment in which learners work cooperatively and purposefully using a variety of resources to understand themselves, their immediate community, and the global society in which they live.

OUTCOME 6:

As reflective practitioners, candidates will implement culturally relevant and responsive teaching, addressing the ever changing developmental and educational needs of diverse students, families, and society in partnership with schools and communities.

Specifically, candidates at Angelo State demonstrate these proficiencies:

- respect individual and cultural differences of students and their families.
- model and encourage appreciation for students' cultural heritage, unique endowments, learning styles, interests, and needs.
- design learning experiences that show consideration for student culture and heritage in appropriate classroom, school, and social contexts.
- collaborate with diverse families, professionals, and communities.
- integrate and adapt instructional strategies and assessments that are appropriate for and responsive to diverse student's needs, abilities, and interests including the needs of English language learners.
- are sensitive to concerns that affect learners and take advantage of community diversity, strengths, and resources for the welfare and success of all students.
- create a learning environment in which diversity and individual differences are valued and respected.
- consider the impact of their own interactions with students and the interactions among students on classroom climate and student learning and development.
- recognize and support the efforts of families to engage in the education of their children.

Proficiencies and outcomes for the Educator Preparation Program (EPP) are developed from the Unit vision, mission, philosophy and purpose. The following entities are involved in the approval of educator preparation programs in the state of Texas:

- The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approves all degrees, with a unique process for degrees leading to educator certification. This process has been mandated by the Texas legislature and limits the number of hours of professional education courses allowed in a candidate's program of study. In the state of Texas there are no majors or baccalaureate degrees in education.

- The Texas Education Agency oversees the work of the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC). SBEC develops the standards and the certification examinations which all candidates complete. All degrees are appropriately structured and have been approved as teacher certification degrees by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB).

At Angelo State University, the Educator Preparation Program outcomes and proficiencies are aligned with Texas Standards for Educator Certification (TExES examinations) and the Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS).

Candidates develop professional proficiencies throughout the program. At the completion of their Educator Preparation Program, candidates have developed the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to achieve program outcomes. Specifically, outcomes are demonstrated in content knowledge, pedagogical skills, professional dispositions, instructional decision-making, learner-centered instruction, and culturally relevant and responsive teaching.

The Educator Preparation Program (EPP) has been developed from theory, research, and practice and has been approved by the state of Texas to recommend candidates to be certified as teachers, ready to practice the art and science of teaching.

4.3 Knowledge Base

Introduction

The knowledge base for educator preparation at Angelo State University comes from philosophy, history, theory, research and practice. From the beginnings of time, humanity has searched for the meaning of truth and life. One definition of education is to seek truth and meaning. Ancient Greek and Roman philosophers and educators pondered the meaning of life and sought truth and wisdom to pass along to a nation's young. Plato, Aristotle and Rousseau spoke about the nature of children, asserting that children are naturally good and that their education should be arranged to fit their differing personalities. European philosophers and theorists, such as Freud, Piaget, and Montessori were heavily influenced by the ancients but made their own impact on theories of development and education. When colonial America emerged, settlers retained their commitments to education but asserted rugged individualism and thought. This diversity of thought led America to embrace free and public education for all.

The success of students, educational curriculum, the systems of schools, and the training of teachers in the United States has long been valued by citizens and government. History and tradition have contributed much to these developments. Research has contributed both questions and answers to dilemmas of education and life. Educational practices have also shaped policy and change. In fact, the most recent writings assert that there are "best practices" to follow in educational endeavors and pursuits.

In addition to historical changes and philosophical influences, educational practices in the United States have experienced continuous movement in theory, thought, and practice. Perspectives have shifted as a result of theory development, the ingenuity of research, and the innovation of practices. Sometimes these shifts have been dramatic

departures from what has been, sometimes change has been slower and methodical, and sometimes no changes have occurred at all.

European and American theorists have contributed substantially to educational practice. Psychoanalytic perspectives from Freud and Erikson and others have contributed to considerations related to the development of healthy personalities and to the social development of children and adults. In Russia, Lev Vygotsky elaborated on these positions to include the pervasive influence of social and cultural exchange on relationships between children as learners and adults as teachers. Behavioral theory in the United States has profoundly impacted teaching and learning practices, sometimes in direct opposition to other belief systems.

Developmental, humanistic, and ecological theoretical positions have each contributed to educational thought and practice. A synthesis describes both dichotomies and similarities related to human growth, development, and learning. These relationships state that development is:

- multidimensional and interdisciplinary,
- continuous and cumulative,
- influenced by both heredity and environment,
- continuous and discontinuous,
- reflective of both stability and change,
- cyclical, repetitive, and reciprocal,
- reflective of individual and gender diversity,
- reflective of class and culture diversity.

Educational practice has experienced shifts over time. Much like a pendulum, the oppositional perspectives of hereditary or environmental influences on children's development and success sway back and forth. This "nature versus nurture" argument continues to impact educational thought, research and practice. Additionally, a developmental perspective versus behavioral opinions and interpretations related to children's overall learning patterns appear oppositional. Varying opinions are not new to these swings of thought and practice. Still another dichotomy is the discussion related to teaching as a science or teaching as an art. The very possibility of difference becomes a stimulating exchange for educators and others.

Lastly, shifts in thought and practice have focused on teaching and learning. One shift is from a teacher development model in educator preparation to a learner-centered model. Still recently, teacher practice has moved from a reactive to a reflective model. Today, educators are being looked to as decision-makers, action researchers, and reflective practitioners in the professional arena. The historical source of these practices comes from educational progressivism. As early as the mid-1700's Rousseau and then Pestalozzi spoke of experience centered, real, relevant and reflective teaching, with the teacher as a facilitator of learning. These philosophers promoted a child-centered learning environment that attended to the emotional and social needs of students. In the late 1800's and continuing to recent history, John Dewey, a progressive and a pragmatist, asserted the need for a child-centered, not subject-centered learning experience where the child was an active not a passive learner.

In the United States, events of history and politics have shaped educational practice. In the early 1900's, a substantial amount of developmental research was conducted, particularly in the area of physical and motor development, and intelligence. The results of these studies heavily influenced teaching and student learning. The world was impacted by technological advances and space travel in the 1950's and 60's. Simultaneously, Benjamin Bloom researched and developed a taxonomy of objectives in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. To this day, the application of his work is evident. In the mid-1960's, America's War on Poverty made a substantial impact on educational practices. Commitment to intervention for poor children and their families has persisted to current time.

The 1970's brought other policy decisions that have permanently impacted educational practices. Federal legislation mandating the education of all children in the mainstream was implemented and followed by more comprehensive legislation related to additional risk factors. The federal government began to impact the education of all children in addition to the policies of states.

Through the 1980's and '90's, studies, reports, and panels exposed what appeared to be inadequacies in educational practices. These assertions publicized educational issues and led to more comprehensive practices. One cautionary report was entitled, "A Nation at Risk." Another effort to mediate seemingly inadequate and ineffective school was called, "Goals 2000." These critical mandates brought about yet another shift in educational practices. The government, business, and the public now demanded new national goals, standards, and accountability for the nation's schools.

While these reports and publications appeared to condemn educational practice, other researchers were making assertions to address the implied inadequacies of American schools. Gerald Bracey has continuously responded critically to national reports and political decisions related to the effectiveness and accountability of schools. He is quick to challenge statistical interpretations and conclusions of any governmental positions or policy writings related to education. John Goodlad conducted research and wrote about effective schools and reform of teacher education. Ernest Boyer and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching also published substantial analyses of teachers, learners, and schools. These positive and optimistic views provided forward-looking practices to meet the challenges of a diverse school and societal population. In part, a result was once again federal legislation committing to, "No Child Left Behind."

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation is greater than a commitment to educational accountability with attention to children at risk for success in school. It is also a call for highly qualified teachers in the nation's schools. The results of teacher quality studies arising from NCLB have revealed that highly qualified teachers share these broad elements. They have:

- completed a teacher-preparation program and hold a degree.
- achieved state certification (licensure) appropriate to the level and subject they teach.
- completed specific coursework in pedagogy.
- demonstrated one dimension of competence by completing mandated state examinations.

- completed observations, field experiences, practica, and supervised practice teaching (Rice, 2003).

Additional educational researchers and writers have heavily impacted practices in schools. Lee Schulman, Ernest Boyer, John Goodlad, and others have promoted the need for teachers to be solidly grounded in subject matter content. Along with these experts has been Linda Darling-Hammond, a substantially influential education professional. Her work and the work of others address the preparation of teachers to promote effective student learning. Darling-Hammond (as well as others) take a student-centered approach. “Reaching every student rather than covering the curriculum, connecting to all learners rather than merely offering education, is our task” (1994, pp. 6-13). Goodman & Goodman continue to write about authentic context and meaningful experience for learners. Students who are actively engaged in their own learning can become successful. Teachers who are actively engaged in their students’ learning are successful. Additionally, Jonathan Kozol (2007), in his prolific writings especially related to social justice, became associated with the need for critical and comprehensive educational reform to assure that the preparation of effective teachers met diverse students’ needs. Alfie Kohn (1999), has also taken critical positions related to effective teacher preparation and the corresponding need for educational reform in the United States.

The outcomes and proficiencies for the Educator Preparation Program at Angelo State are drawn from philosophy, history, theory, research and best practices. They are also drawn from real life commitments to the highest quality education for teachers and students. The following sections articulate elements of the knowledge base related to each program outcome.

Content Knowledge

Countless researchers have written about the need for teachers to be knowledgeable in the content of the subjects they teach. Boyer synthesized this point, saying that effective teachers have these characteristics:

- are well-informed and knowledgeable in content matter.
- know the unique sequence of development of students; respond to the whole child’s needs.
- practice the art of teaching thus empowering active learners.
- are open, authentic human beings (1995, pp. 41-43).

Appropriate choices for the knowledge of content for learning come from state and national standards of the professions. In Texas, the Texas Educator Standards have been developed from the content standards of professional organizations contributing to the preparation of educators. Test frameworks in the areas of content knowledge and pedagogy and professional responsibilities have been developed from the state standards and from best practices. These frameworks constitute the breadth of knowledge and skills required of candidates seeking certification in the state. Correspondingly, these standards identify scope, sequence, and progression of principles, concepts, relationships, issues, and facts important for students at each grade level. State standards are aligned with national professional standards to ensure continuity of experiences for students and accountability for teachers and schools.

State content tests of the Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (TExES) measure candidates' knowledge of subject matter and their abilities to choose and develop content experiences appropriate to grade level expectations articulated in the state public school curriculum, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The TExES Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) test assesses a candidate's instructional choices applied to appropriate content experiences for grade level expectations.

John Goodlad wrote in his book, *Educational Renewal* (1994), that teaching candidates needed a strong background in academic knowledge. He described this as encompassing a general and liberal knowledge base as one component of teacher education and the other component as the completion of a subject matter specialization. Educator Preparation Program candidates complete skills sequences, general and liberal arts foundations, and select a subject matter content major. This process promotes content area specialization for effective teaching. Candidates in elementary preparation programs need a broad-based interdisciplinary content major to address the generalist perspective expected of elementary teachers.

To assess competence in knowledge of content, candidates complete appropriate content area examinations. In educator preparation programs in Texas for example, content knowledge is monitored by the Texas Accountability System for Educator Preparation (ASEP). Expectations for candidates in content knowledge translate to appropriate choices for content learning experiences for students. Knowledge of content becomes the umbrella under which other characteristics are manifested and other interactions are accomplished. Knowledge of content for the candidate is elaborated to include transformation of content into meaningful and relevant age appropriate experiences for learners (Bredecamp and Copple, 1997). Candidates use their knowledge of content to select key knowledge and skills for students. They are able to communicate the content of the curriculum, to make connections for learners, and to collaborate with learners in the teaching-learning process. To assist students in making appropriate connections of content, candidates encourage and model individual critical and independent thought and problem-solving skills based on experiences with content matter. Candidates can then assess student progress in the content curriculum in authentic ways, using the results of assessment to continue to build on experiences with subject matter.

Candidate knowledge of content is also importantly applied to the individual and varied styles of learning exhibited by students. This individual variability presents challenges to communicate content with relevance and connection. Lastly, candidates demonstrate sensitivity and responsiveness to the culture, heritage, language, and background of individual students and correspondingly develop meaningful instructional content experiences. These applications related to candidates' knowledge of content are facilitated by the application of the Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS).

Pedagogical Skills

Teachers need skills. In addition, professional educator preparation programs assert that teachers need specialized pedagogical skills. Issues related to teachers as "born, not

made,” continue in educational and non-educational settings. Perhaps the polar opposite or mutual exclusivity of this position is not accurate with regard to effective teachers. Some teachers are “born” with natural skills and attributes that contribute to their effectiveness with learners in the classroom. However, all educator preparation program candidates benefit from skills practice and experiences that support the development of their pedagogical skills. Joseph Hasenstab summed this position:

Outstanding teachers exhibit natural attributes and skills. Some they are born with, some they acquire with experience, and some they learn through teacher training programs. These qualities are independent of content, teaching style, grade level, or philosophy, and seem to shine forth, giving the possessor unmistakable charisma (Author).

The best teachers think about skills related to teaching and learning. Bain (2004) looked for teachers who believed that knowledge is constructed, not received. In classrooms, teachers, teacher candidates, and students became a community of learners where the teacher was not the sole source of knowledge; students were encouraged to generate and share their own knowledge and understanding which then contributed to increased learning for all (Brooks & Brooks, 1993, 1999).

Thinking about pedagogical skills is not quite sufficient enough for a candidate to be successful in teaching. The practice of skills is a hallmark of the Angelo State Educator Preparation Program. From interaction with peers, one-on-one activities with students, small group instruction, to full classroom teaching, the practice and use of evidence-based skills and techniques is of major importance.

Berry (2002), also writes about the importance of pedagogical skills:

High quality teachers know more than content. Highly qualified teachers must also know “how to organize and teach their lessons in ways that assure diverse students can learn those subjects.... Highly qualified teachers don’t just teach well designed, standards-based lessons, they know how and why their students learn (pp. 1-2).

In Texas, pedagogical skills are derived from the collective best practices of educators and are reflective of national professional association guidelines for effective teaching. Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS) is a framework whereby new teachers practice their skills and benefit from support and mentoring. This framework also focuses on candidates and new teachers increased effectiveness and impact on student learning. Lastly, input for pedagogical skills development and practice comes from the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) principles.

What pedagogical skills are focused upon in the Educator Preparation Program? A synthesized list, not to be construed as absolute or complete, identifies the skills candidates need to develop. Not ranked in order of importance, an effective teacher has these skills:

- cares about students, teaching, and learning
- answers questions or admits not knowing
- holds students accountable for their actions

- talks at the students' level
- is well –prepared and organized, but flexible
- asks thought provoking questions
- uses examples, analogies, or metaphors that relate content to the students' world
- makes the objectives of lessons and class sessions clear
- presents viewpoints different from the students' own
- paces instruction appropriately
- encourages independent thought, critical thinking, and active engagement of learners
- knows if the class is following the instructional sequence and takes actions to re-teach, explain differently, or elaborate when the class is not
- is concerned about the quality of one's own teaching and engages in self-evaluation
- draws upon the students' prior knowledge and skills in order to shape the class and help students learn
- creates a climate for an effective learning environment
- is enthusiastic about teaching and learning
- motivates students with high standards for achievement and high expectations for student learning
- uses technology, actively, critically, and effectively
- connects and uses instructional materials and resources
- manages behavior and the operation of the class
- develops authentic assessment strategies
- keeps progressive records
- communicates effectively with colleagues and parents/caregivers
- plans instruction based on students' needs and interests
- develops instructional sequence according to standards and expectations of the school and of the state

Research and “best practices” assert that teachers need to practice their craft. Candidates have opportunities to practice skills throughout the program. Opportunities are in place to participate in microteaching, in tutoring, in small group peer teaching, and in developing instruction for diverse learners in candidate field experiences. At the completion of their preparation program, candidates are “beginning novice” teachers, “fit to practice” at the “beginning competent” level. With guidance and support, practice of skills will allow beginning teachers to grow and change personally and professionally. Content faculty and Educator Preparation Program faculty model teaching skills and effective teaching practices. Experiences with public school partner teachers also add to candidates' skills.

Embedded in pedagogical skills are competencies in the use of appropriate technologies for instruction. In Texas, all program completers must demonstrate competence in technology applications from standards developed by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and articulated in the Texas Technology Application Standards for all Beginning Teachers. Candidates have information, practice, and assessment of technology skills in the Educator Preparation Program. These expectations and standards become a part of the knowledge base for candidates.

Dispositions

Candidates acquire and exhibit a set of dispositions encouraging them to be dedicated and respectful in planning, implementing, and assessing effective instruction to meet the diverse needs of all students. Through an understanding of culturally relevant and responsive teaching, candidates employ a social justice perspective, searching for alternatives to inequalities associated with race, social class, language, gender, age, and other categories of diversity (Banks, 2006; Oakes & Lipon, 1999). Acknowledging that a supportive school climate requires a caring teacher and a nurturing environment (Eisner, 2006; Moore, 1993; Noddings, 1982, 1994) Angelo State candidates are ethical professionals responsive to individual student needs believing that all students can learn and can become life-long learners.

Teacher behaviors and habits of mind center on effective and affective quality descriptions. A statement first attributed to Theodore Roosevelt, makes the case for a caring teacher. He said, "Nobody cares how much you know, until they know how much you care." That a teacher displays caring is a consistent theme in the literature of characteristics of effective teachers. Noddings (2001)

... connects caring with preparation and organization. Students recognize caring in teachers who are prepared and organized. This philosophy of caring permeates the actions of teachers our students remember (cited in Thompson, Greer, & Greer, 2004).

Noddings (2001) continued to write about teachers' caring behaviors:

The relationship of teacher and student, giving and receiving care, is a continuous one, lasting over time and involving intimate and personal understanding (pp. 100-101).

Marsh (1991) elaborated upon affective qualities of teachers by describing quality of relationships and rapport between teachers and students and characteristics of both warmth and enthusiasm. Cruickshank, Jenkins and Metcalf (2003) also included affective behaviors, especially caring behaviors, in their definition of effective teachers:

Most people would agree that good teachers are caring, supportive, concerned about the welfare of students, knowledgeable about their subject matter, able to get along with parents... and genuinely excited about the work they do.... Effective teachers are able to help students learn (p. 329).

The Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS, 2005) articulates qualities and characteristic behaviors of effective teachers. Their synthesis identifies personal qualities and affect, effective behaviors related to instruction, communication skills, diversity values, and professional ethics. Thompson, Greer, and Greer (2004) also completed a synthesis of effective teacher qualities. They identified twelve characteristics, all centered around the theme of caring. They stated that these characteristics result in nurturing teachers who understand the importance of caring for their students and their impact on student achievement. With caring as the "umbrella" behavior, Thompson, Greer, & Greer (2004) described their findings. Effective teacher candidates have these dispositions:

- display fairness
- have a positive outlook
- are prepared
- use a personal touch
- possess a sense of humor
- are creative
- admit mistakes
- are forgiving
- are respectful of students
- maintain high expectations
- show compassion
- develop a sense of belonging for students.

Candidates at Angelo State program demonstrate the above dispositions and believe that all students can learn. They commit to ethical personal and professional behaviors, and they follow professional codes of ethics for teachers. As an integral component of the program, candidates ascribe to the Candidates' Statement of Commitment regarding Dispositions. The commitment statement has been adapted from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, and encompasses professional behaviors consistent with the literature on effective teaching qualities. A study of items from the Commitment regarding Dispositions and the Dispositions statements from the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) identified substantial alignment of dispositions. Out of twenty dispositions named, there was agreement on sixteen items. Three only appeared on the North Carolina format and not in the INTASC principles. Only one category was not substantially present in either source. That category was identified as demonstrating a positive model of oral and written language communication. This category, while stated implicitly in these two documents, is emphasized explicitly at other points and experiences in the educator preparation program. Categories of agreement between the North Carolina dispositions statement and the INTASC dispositions were: poise and attitudes, initiative, ethics, organization and planning, flexibility, diversity, cooperation in problem solving, responsiveness to feedback, establishing rapport, collaborates, provides leadership, affirms diverse perspectives, live-long learners, believes in success for all students, and demonstrates involvement.

To accomplish, demonstrate and internalize all of these professional dispositions, Linda Darling-Hammond (1998) and Goodlad, (1984, 1994) wrote about the need for candidates and classroom teachers to increase their own awareness of their impact on student learning and to engage in reflective practice. Identification, development, demonstration, and internationalization of professional dispositions are critical and illusive, difficult to categorize and difficult to quantify. Most practicing professionals know what dispositions are desirable for teachers but few know how to engender and measure them in novice teachers or candidates.

Angelo State's Educator Preparation Program believes in and has chosen to follow these observable and measurable dispositions for candidates:

Professionalism

- **Timeliness** is consistent in class, clinical experiences, and group work, appointments, completion of assignments.
- **Attendance** is consistent at class, clinical experiences, group meetings, appointments, student teaching and internships.
- **Appearance and dress** matches schools' dress standards and expectations when candidate are present in the schools.
- **Poise/attitude** reflects proactive planning, preparation, and engagement in classes and in the schools.
- **Initiative** is demonstrated by offering ideas and suggestions to others, setting goals for self-improvement, seeking advice and feedback, and independently searching for, creating, or modifying plans and materials.
- **Ethics** is demonstrated by maintaining confidentiality about EC-12 students and their families, following the Code of Ethics for Texas Educators Integrity, disclosing any unlawful activity upon application to and during the teacher education program that might adversely affect ability to obtain a teaching license, as well as passing criminal background checks and drug screening required by the school systems.

Teaching Qualities

- **Demonstrates organization** through student-centered planning, selection/preparation of materials, time management.
- **Demonstrates flexibility** in modifying ideas, materials, plans, lesson implementation, course assignments.
- **Values diversity** through choosing and creating inclusive materials, lessons, assessments, and creating classroom environments that are inviting for diverse students' participation and learning; and that provide equitable access to instruction.

Relationships with Others

- **Cooperates** with instructors/school personnel; resolves differences or misunderstandings respectfully and reflectively.
- **Responds productively and respectfully to feedback** from instructors, classroom teachers, mentors, and principals.
- **Establishes rapport** with EC-12 students and their families.
- **Collaborates** with peers, instructors, schools personnel and parents; shares responsibilities, ideas, materials.
- **Provides leadership** to peers, instructors, school personnel and parents; initiates, suggests, contributes.
- **Affirms** perspective and contributions of diverse students, teachers, families, instructors, and peers.

Professional Development

- **Engages in reflection** by using various forms of feedback about candidates' teaching effectiveness, including assessment data showing impact on EC-12 students' learning.
- **Engages in life-long learning** through reading, observing, assessing, and participating in organizations.
- **Promotes success for all students** through best practices, informative assessments, and inclusive environments.
- **Demonstrates involvement** with parents, families, school personnel, and community agencies on behalf of students.

(Adapted from the University of North Carolina, Charlotte)

Defendable instructional decisions and technology applications

Instructional decision-making speaks to the essence of teaching. Teachers teach. Teaching, however, is much more complicated than the statement implies. Within the realm of instructional decision-making, planning, delivery, assessment and more decisions, teachers are challenged daily with issues from individual student circumstances and from groups of students in classrooms. All education professionals look to a candidate, teacher, or to other school personnel for effective and reflective instructional decision-making. This includes:

- teaching to promote student learning
- differentiating instruction
- being creative or resourceful
- managing instruction successfully
- developing assessment content, methods, and criteria
- becoming an advocate for student success
- engaging in critical self-evaluation and reflection
- giving and receiving mentoring, tutoring, peer coaching
- tutoring students
- communicating with students, families, colleagues, and community representatives
- engaging in partnership with parents and with students' success as a goal

Robert Marzano (2007), captured the dilemma educators face when he said,

...research will never be able to identify instructional strategies that work with every student in every class, The best research can do is tell us which strategies have a good chance (i.e., high probability) of working well with students (p. 5).

He went on to say that teachers need to determine which strategies to use with each student. "In effect, a good part of effective teaching is an art... (p.5). Then Marzano reflected on the work of David Berliner more than two decades ago,

...(Berliner) ultimately concludes that effective teaching is a dynamic mixture of expertise in a vast array of instructional strategies combined with a profound understanding of the individual students in class and their needs at particular points in time.... Berliner characterized effective teaching as part art and part science, (long ago) (p. 5).

The argument of the art versus the science of teaching touches the "born teacher-made teacher" phenomenon. Teaching is definitely part art and part science. This makes instructional decision making even more critical as candidates utilize content, pedagogical skills and dispositions in varying circumstances with varying results. This is the science. The art of teaching then becomes the affect, personal connections and relationships that a teacher makes with students. Both the art and the science contribute to effective teaching and learning. Marzano has room for both perspectives in his assertions:

The science part of effective teaching is founded on decades of research that has provided guidance for the general categories of behaviors that constitute effective teaching and for the specific techniques that can be employed within those general categories. The art part of teaching is founded on the dual realizations that teachers cannot provide answers for every student in every situation and that the same behaviors can be employed in a different order and fashion by two different teachers with equally beneficial results (p. 191).

Sources of additional input into instructional decision-making come from such writers as Goodlad (1994) as he described the critical necessity of multiple and varied field experiences for candidates to experience real and relevant teaching. He also promoted opportunities that supported hands-on teaching and learning, observation of many types, role-playing, introspection, reflection, and critical conversations for candidates during their field experiences. Instructional decision-making encompasses all of these areas.

Popham (2008) and others have asserted the importance of the instruction-assessment connection. Assessment results lead to informed instructional decision-making. Assessment decisions are reflected and practiced in field experiences, practica, and student teaching.

Additionally, socio-cultural models of teacher preparation promote collaboration between candidates, teachers, and other professionals in mutual support and decision-making. While teaching is most definitely an art and a science it is also substantially interactional. Sometimes the people relationships are more intense than the educational content. Candidates need to develop responsiveness to the needs of their students before, during, and after instructional experiences so that progressive decisions lead to substantive student learning.

Teaching content and skills is not enough. Educators need to encourage critical thinking, problem solving, and higher order thinking skills in students. An educated person is not one who knows it all, it is one who knows how to find out. Benjamin Bloom, as early as 1964, wrote about a hierarchy of thinking skills critical for the overall optimum

development of thinkers. Bloom's taxonomy is still a cornerstone in instructional planning and decision-making.

Closely associated with promoting critical thinking and problem solving is the effective application of technology in educational arenas. Candidates have instructional experiences focused on technology applications according to the standards of the state of Texas, named Technology Applications for all Teachers. These standards have been developed from the standards of the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) and represent competencies for all teachers in the use, application, and integration of appropriate technology in classrooms. Candidates must know how to use technology in instruction.

The program outcome of making defensible instructional decisions contributes to the application and integration of content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and candidate dispositions. The outcomes of learner-centered instruction and culturally relevant and responsive teaching further contribute to the development of candidates as decision-makers.

Student-centered learning

Often information from history, research, theory and practice has looked first to teacher development as the critical component in successful education. More recently, drawing from all that has been studied and written, a shift has occurred from teacher development to students as the center of their learning. Candidates in the Educator Preparation Program experience this shift in their professional preparation.

Once again, early research and writings emphasize the importance of learners being active and engaged in their learning. The earliest works of John Dewey provide a basis for this discussion. Later, Jean Piaget and the constructivist perspectives of Kamii (1990), DeVries and Kohlberg (1987) continued to assert the critical importance of learners being actively engaged in their own learning. Berk and Winsler (1995), Brooks and Brooks (1993, 1999) and numerous others support this position and incorporate active learning and engagement of learners in their writings.

Bain (2004) articulated the need for adults to respond to students rather than students responding to adults in learning. He wrote about thinking and learning:

...The best teachers believe that "deep" learning takes time. Students can learn "superficially," or just enough to memorize for the test, very quickly. Changing their mental model takes time. Best teachers helped students change their mental model by constructing classroom activities that challenged the student just enough to make them think about their current mental model. They also provided the student with a safe, comfortable classroom environment so that the student would be emotionally able to grapple with the challenge. Teachers gave students plenty of opportunities to practice their new mental model, giving them constructive feedback along the way. The take home message is: Learning for understanding takes time, the proper classroom environment, and activities that help the students construct their own understanding of the information (no page).

Building on historical assertions supporting student-centered learning and active engagement of learners in their own learning, task forces from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) have developed guidelines for appropriate practices in early childhood programs. Critical components of developmentally appropriate practices are commitments to students being active learners and teaching being student-centered. Numerous educational practitioners have applied these assertions in their writings, such as in the text by Kostelnik, Soderman, and Whiren (2007) entitled, *Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum: Best Practices in Early Childhood Education*. Developmentally appropriate curriculum encompasses knowledge and skills for candidates and teachers across all levels of schooling. Adults need to interact in ways appropriate to the individual age of students, to individual student learning patterns, and to individual student cultural background.

Along with ideals related to a focus on student-centered, active and engaged learning are proponents in favor of developing classrooms that are learning communities. Ann Brown and her colleagues, cited in Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) describe learning communities this way:

Such communities include activity structures that support research, students teaching students, and sharing information. They carefully take into account the centrality of discourse in communities of practice and the importance of distributed expertise in acquiring deep content knowledge. To create such communities, teachers must understand how language and discourse practices mediate learning in their classrooms and the ways that such practices can include and exclude particular students (p. 167).

Candidates interested in developing learning communities will apply principles of active engagement in their classrooms leading to student-centered learning. Candidates also need to combine their personal and professional qualities of caring with a nurturing environment to learn how to develop a supportive school climate (Eisner, 2006; Moore, 1993; Noddings, 1982, 1994).

A synthesis of research and practices related to the importance of student-centered learning has revealed candidate and teacher commitments. These commitments are:

- knowledge of students' growth and development
- response to student learning styles and how these influence student learning
- awareness of communication modes, including effective listening
- encouragement of students' active engagement in learning
- consideration of students' interests, talents, and skills
- sensitivity to issues of equity and fairness
- committed to encouraging students' self-directed learning
- modeling cooperation and collaboration between learners
- having high expectations for students' success

John Goodlad (1986, 1994), cited the learner as "the center of the world." This phenomenon is as appropriate an assertion for school students as it is for educator preparation candidates. Content, skills, dispositions, decisions, learners, and cultural responsiveness all contribute to an individual's ability to make sense of the world (p. 144). The accountable learner at the center keeps education in focus.

Culturally relevant and responsive teaching

Diversity of learners and the diversity of learning permeate educational practices. Family culture and diversity become first on a list of considerations related to student success in schools. An effective relationship between home and school cannot be developed without attention to culture, background, and heritage. Along with communication and relationship building, parent involvement in schools has been shown to impact student success (Fullan, 1991; Reeves, 2004).

James Banks (2006) has written substantially in the area of diversity in education. His assertions related to culture and diversity identify issues and solutions for school practice and for teacher preparation. Closely associated with these assertions has been the establishment of a social justice perspective in schools. Oakes and Lipton (1999) and others have promoted the need for justice and equity in schools to be able to respond with sensitivity to the needs of diverse students.

Additionally, Rothstein, Fisch, and Trumbull (2008) have written about cultural values and beliefs situated at the core of all classroom organization and management decisions. Candidates (and teachers) need to respond to the diversity of learners.

York (2003) defined cultural responsive programs as necessarily representing and supporting the home cultures of the families whose children attend school (p.59). She went on to interpret Brunson-Phillips' (1988) discussion of culturally relevant education. It is education where teachers are

...working to consciously establish a program approach which both assists children to function in their own cultural community and builds their competence in the culture of the larger society (p. 72-73).

What does culturally responsive curriculum look like? Again, York (2003) described curriculum based on students' lives, activities and instruction that incorporated homes and heritage, and instruction encouraging students to learn about themselves and others (p. 73). What do culturally responsive curriculum experiences feel like? Students maintain their personal power and sense of identity, their families are appreciated, supported, and enhanced, and students do not experience daily conflict or confusion about who they are (York, 2003, p. 73).

The content and experiences related to culturally relevant and responsive teaching for candidates in the educator preparation program embraces these competencies synthesized from research and best practices. Candidates demonstrate cultural relevance and responsiveness through:

- a deep sense of respect
- an awareness of their own culture
- an ability to maintain cultural integrity
- a knowledge of other cultural practices
- an understanding of the history of cultures in the United States
- an ability to get accurate information about families and cultures
- an ability to avoid assumptions

- a belief that other perspectives are equally valid
- an ability to critique existing cultural knowledge bases and practices
- an ability to take another perspective
- an openness and willingness and ability to adapt and try new behaviors
- an ability to effectively solve problems
- an ability to tolerate ambiguity, conflict, and change (York, 2003, p. 73).

Additionally, candidates have experiences to know and be able to do effective work with other cultures. These experiences involve knowledge, skills, dispositions, decisions, and learners in implementing culturally relevant and responsive teaching. Candidates...

- become culturally competent
- get to know families and identify their strengths
- build partnerships with parents
- interact with children in culturally congruent ways
- provide culturally consistent caring
- work to reduce cultural conflicts between home and school.
- differentiate problem behavior from a culturally different patterns of behavior
- incorporate students' home language into the classroom
- help students develop strong cultural identities
- invite families to share their culture with the school
- recognize the contributions of students' home culture
- strengthen families by connecting them to the neighborhood and community
- participate in community cultural events (York, 2003, p. 75).

Finally, candidates apply strategies also identified from research and best practices. Specifically, candidates...

- emphasize verbal interactions
- teach students to use self talk
- facilitate divergent thinking
- use small-group instruction and cooperative learning
- employ "verve" in the classroom
- focus on real-world tasks
- promote interactions between students and between students and adults (Webb, Metha, and Jordan, 2007, p. 226).

To practice culturally relevant and responsive teaching effectively, candidates meet their task with an openness and willingness to address the needs of all learners, believing that all students can learn. This ends the discussion of the knowledge base foundations of the Educator Preparation Program at Angelo State. It is also, however, a beginning, these practices are ever evolving and ever changing as all educators continue to search for wisdom and truth.

4.4 Candidate Proficiencies Alignment

The Educator Preparation Program outcomes and candidate proficiencies are aligned with the Texas Educator Standards, with the Texas Beginning Educator Support System

(TxBESS) and with standards from professional associations. The alignment of certification program areas with standards of professional organizations is contained in individual program reports. The table presented on the following pages demonstrates this alignment.

ALIGNMENT OF OUTCOMES, PROFICIENCIES AND STANDARDS

CANDIDATE OUTCOMES AND PROFICIENCIES	TEXAS BEGINNING EDUCATOR SUPPORT SYSTEM (TxBESS)
<p>Outcome 1: As reflective practitioners, candidates will demonstrate their knowledge of the content of disciplines appropriately applied to the age and level of the students they teach to ensure the implementation of effective instruction and successful development of all students.</p> <p>Specifically, candidates at Angelo State demonstrate these proficiencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exhibit a strong working knowledge of subject matter which enables students to better understand patterns of thinking specific to a discipline. • stay abreast of current knowledge and practice within the content areas, related disciplines and technology. • design instruction appropriate for all students that reflects an understanding of relevant content and is based on continuous and appropriate assessment. • know and understand the importance of the state content and performance standards as outlined in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), Texas State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC Content Standards); and SBEC Test Frameworks (TExES). • know and understand the relevant content of the discipline being taught, including concepts, principles, relationships, methods of inquiry, and key issues. • know how to plan lesson content and skills and implement instructional strategies that make connections within the discipline and across other disciplines. • know how to use varied activities and instructional groupings to engage students in instructional content and to meet instructional goals and objectives. • know and understand how to engage students intellectually by teaching content in relevant and meaningful ways that promote all students' active and invested participation in the learning process. • know how to develop and use a variety of formative and summative assessment tools consistently applied to instructional goals and outcomes, fairly administered, accurately measured, carefully interpreted, and effectively communicated. 	<p>Standard 1a The Candidate demonstrates knowledge of content and pedagogy in order to guide student learning.</p>
<p>Outcome 2: As reflective practitioners, candidates will demonstrate their knowledge of pedagogical skills applied to the development of effective instruction of all students.</p> <p>Specifically, candidates at Angelo State demonstrate these proficiencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • design curriculum to motivate students through active learning in supportive environments for optimal learning. • monitor and manage student learning using appropriate assessments as an integral part of instruction, thus responding to the needs of all learners. • select and use materials, technology, activities, space and other resources that are developmentally appropriate, that support instructional goals and objectives, and are designed to engage student interest in meaningful learning. 	<p>Standard 1a: The teacher uses pedagogical techniques particular to each content area to convey information and teach new skills.</p> <p>Standard 1c: The Candidate selects key knowledge and skills for instruction, considering a number of factors—the state standards, district curriculum, community expectations, and the needs of all students.</p> <p>Standard 1d: The Candidate has knowledge of and makes use of materials, resources, and technology resources to support student learning of the key knowledge and skills.</p>

CANDIDATE OUTCOMES AND PROFICIENCIES	TEXAS BEGINNING EDUCATOR SUPPORT SYSTEM (TxBESS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use verbal, nonverbal, and media techniques so that students explore ideas collaboratively, pose questions, and support one another in their learning. • plan lessons that reflect an understanding of students' developmental characteristics and needs, using a variety of pedagogical techniques to convey information and teach skills. • plan instructional activities that progress sequentially and support stated instructional goals, are aligned with the TEKS, are clear, relevant, meaningful, age appropriate and able to be assessed. • establish classroom rules and procedures to promote an organized and productive learning environment, to set appropriate behavior standards that communicate high and realistic expectations for students' behavior and to ensure that students understand both expectations and consequences of misbehavior. • promote student learning by providing responsive instruction that makes use of effective communication techniques, instructional strategies that actively engage students in the learning process, and timely, high-quality feedback. 	<p>Standard 1f: The Candidate uses well-designed instructional plans to assess student learning and communicates assessment criteria to students.</p> <p>Standard 2d: The Candidate effectively manages student behavior.</p> <p>Standard 3a: The Candidate uses clear and accurate communication to engage students in learning.</p> <p>Standard 3d: The Candidate designs and implements assessment as an integral part of instruction on an ongoing basis.</p>
<p>Outcome 3: As reflective practitioners, candidates will demonstrate commitment to and performance of professional dispositions, appropriately applied in all aspects of personal and educational endeavors.</p> <p>Specifically, candidates at Angelo State demonstrate these proficiencies:</p> <p>Professionalism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeliness is consistent in class, clinical experiences, and group work, appointments, completion of assignments. • Attendance is consistent at class, clinical experiences, group meetings, appointments, student teaching and internships. • Appearance and dress matches schools' dress standards and expectations when candidate are present in the schools. • Poise/attitude reflects proactive planning, preparation, and engagement in classes and in the schools. • Initiative is demonstrated by offering ideas and suggestions to others, setting goals for self-improvement, seeking advice and feedback, and independently searching for, creating, or modifying plans and materials. • Ethics is demonstrated by maintaining confidentiality about EC-12 students and their families, following the Code of Ethics for Texas Educators Integrity, disclosing any unlawful activity upon application to and during the teacher education program that might adversely affect ability to obtain a teaching license, as well as passing criminal background checks and drug screening required by the school systems. <p>Teaching Qualities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates organization through student-centered planning, selection/preparation of materials, time management. • Demonstrates flexibility in modifying ideas, materials, plans, lesson implementation, course assignments. • Values diversity through choosing and creating inclusive materials, lessons, assessments, and creating classroom environments that are inviting for diverse students' participation and learning; and that provide equitable access to instruction. 	<p>Standard 2a: The Candidate creates a predictable and supportive environment of rapport and respect and promotes positive relationships with and among students.</p> <p>Standard 3a: The Candidate uses clear and accurate communication to engage students in learning.</p> <p>Standard 3e: The Candidate demonstrates flexibility and responsiveness while making hundreds of decisions daily.</p> <p>Standard 4a: The Candidate reflects on teaching and learning, a process by which both the Candidate and students grow and excel.</p> <p>Standard 4d: The Candidate contributes to the school.</p> <p>Standard 4e: The Candidate is continually growing and developing professionally, investing much energy in remaining current and implementing research-based best practices as aligned with the school improvement plan.</p> <p>Standard 4f: The Candidate serves as an advocate for students and for the education profession.</p>

CANDIDATE OUTCOMES AND PROFICIENCIES	TEXAS BEGINNING EDUCATOR SUPPORT SYSTEM (TxBESS)
<p>Relationships with Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperates with instructors/school personnel; resolves differences or misunderstandings respectfully and reflectively. • Responds productively and respectfully to feedback from instructors, classroom teachers, mentors, and principals. • Establishes rapport with EC-12 students and their families. • Collaborates with peers, instructors, schools personnel and parents; shares responsibilities, ideas, materials. • Provides leadership to peers, instructors, school personnel and parents; initiates, suggests, contributes. • Affirms perspective and contributions of diverse students, teachers, families, instructors, and peers. <p>Professional Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages in reflection by using various forms of feedback about candidates' teaching effectiveness, including assessment data showing impact on EC-12 students' learning. • Engages in life-long learning through reading, observing, assessing, and participating in organizations. • Promotes success for all students through best practices, informative assessments, and inclusive environments. • Demonstrates involvement with parents, families, school personnel, and community agencies on behalf of students. <p>(Adapted from the University of North Carolina, Charlotte)</p>	<p>Standard 2a: The Candidate creates a predictable and supportive environment of rapport and respect and promotes positive relationships with and among students.</p> <p>Standard 3a: The Candidate uses clear and accurate communication to engage students in learning.</p> <p>Standard 3e: The Candidate demonstrates flexibility and responsiveness while making hundreds of decisions daily.</p> <p>Standard 4a: The Candidate reflects on teaching and learning, a process by which both the Candidate and students grow and excel.</p> <p>Standard 4d: The Candidate contributes to the school.</p> <p>Standard 4e: The Candidate is continually growing and developing professionally, investing much energy in remaining current and implementing research-based best practices as aligned with the school improvement plan.</p> <p>Standard 4f: The Candidate serves as an advocate for students and for the education profession.</p>
<p>Outcome 4: As reflective practitioners, candidates will demonstrate ability to implement defendable instructional decisions and technology applications leading to effective teaching and learning.</p> <p>Specifically, candidates at Angelo State demonstrate these proficiencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plan instruction in accordance with the Texas SBEC: PPR, SBEC Educator Test Frameworks, and the TEKS. • integrate technology in teaching and learning as defined in the SBEC Technology Standards for Beginning Teachers. • adapt instruction to respond to diverse students' abilities, needs, and interests. • manage and monitor student learning using appropriate assessments and adjusting instruction accordingly. • reflect on the impact of teaching actions and to adjust instructional strategies for student success. • select materials, technology, activities, and space that are developmentally appropriate and designed to engage student interest in learning. • encourage learners to work independently and cooperatively in a positive and stimulating learning climate fueled by self-discipline and motivation. • manage the learning environment effectively so that optimal learning occurs. • select and organize topics recognizing the dynamic nature of knowledge so students make clear connections between what is taught in the classroom and what they experience outside the classroom. 	<p>Standard 1e: The Candidate designs activities that promote student learning, developing a coherent instructional plan that translates key knowledge and skills into meaningful learning for students.</p> <p>Standard 1f: The Candidate uses well-designed instructional plans to assess student learning and communicates assessment criteria to students.</p> <p>Standard 2b: The Candidate establishes a strong culture for learning, which includes everyone becoming engaged in valuable academic pursuits.</p> <p>Standard 2c: The Candidate develops and manages classroom procedures for the smooth operation of the class and efficient use of time.</p> <p>Standard 2e: The Candidate organizes physical space, recognizing that effective use of physical space is important in a learning environment and varies depending on the context and situation.</p>

CANDIDATE OUTCOMES AND PROFICIENCIES	TEXAS BEGINNING EDUCATOR SUPPORT SYSTEM (TxBESS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create an environment in which learners work cooperatively and purposefully using a variety of resources to understand themselves, their immediate community, and the global society in which they live. • think critically, solve problems, reflect on teaching practice, demonstrating success through a variety of roles when teaching. • demonstrate a commitment to learn, improve the profession, maintain professional ethics and personal integrity, and share responsibility for the result of student learning with all members of the learning community. • identify and use group processes to make decisions and solve problems, as a member of a collaborative educational team. 	<p>Standard 4a: The Candidate reflects on teaching and learning, a process by which both the Candidate and students grow and excel.</p>
<p>Outcome 5: As reflective practitioners, candidates will embrace active, engaged student-centered learning.</p> <p>Specifically, candidates at Angelo State demonstrate these proficiencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply knowledge of characteristics of students' age group, students' varied approaches to learning, students' skills and knowledge, students' interests and cultural heritage to develop effective instruction. • encourage students to use all of their individual skills and talents. • collaborate with colleagues to adapt instruction and integrate instructional strategies responsive to the diverse needs, abilities, and interests of individual students. • plan, implement, and assess instruction using technology and other resources. • respond to the needs of all learners by using assessment as an integral component of instruction. • have a vision for the destination of learning, but encourage students to set individual goals and to plan how to reach learning outcomes. • create an environment in which learners work cooperatively and purposefully using a variety of resources to understand themselves, their immediate community, and the global society in which they live. • develop instructional goals and objectives that reflect different types of student learning and skills. • purposefully consider varied features of instruction to maximize student engagement and the development of thinking and problem solving skills. • analyze the results of assessments to aid in determining students' strengths and needs. • recognizes the impact of candidate-student interactions and interactions among students on classroom climate and student learning and development. • is sensitive to students' emotional needs and utilizes a variety of interaction strategies to address those needs. • communicate commitment to student-centered learning to families. • know and use community resources, school services, and laws relating to teacher responsibilities and student rights. • create an environment in which learners work cooperatively and purposefully using a variety of resources to understand themselves, their immediate 	<p>Standard 1b: The Candidate demonstrates knowledge of students to maximize learning.</p> <p>Standard 2d: The Candidate effectively manages student behavior.</p> <p>Standard 3a: The Candidate uses clear and accurate communication to engage students in learning.</p> <p>Standard 3b: The Candidate uses skillful questioning and discussion techniques that are valuable for many instructional purposes, such as facilitating student engagement, accessing critical thinking, and eliciting reflection.</p> <p>Standard 3c: The successful Candidate cognitively engages students in learning activities.</p> <p>Standard 3d: The Candidate designs and implements assessment as an integral part of instruction on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Standard 3e: The Candidate demonstrates flexibility and responsiveness while making hundreds of decisions daily.</p>

CANDIDATE OUTCOMES AND PROFICIENCIES	TEXAS BEGINNING EDUCATOR SUPPORT SYSTEM (TxBESS)
<p>community, and the global society in which they live.</p> <p>Outcome 6: As reflective practitioners, candidates will implement culturally relevant and responsive teaching addressing the ever changing developmental and educational needs of diverse students, families, and society in partnership with schools and communities.</p> <p>Specifically, candidates at Angelo State demonstrate these proficiencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respect individual and cultural differences of students and their families. • model and encourage appreciation for students' cultural heritage, unique endowments, learning styles, interests, and needs. • design learning experiences that show consideration for student culture and heritage in appropriate classroom, school, and social contexts. • collaborate with diverse families, professionals, and communities. • integrate and adapt instructional strategies and assessments that are appropriate for and responsive to diverse student's needs, abilities, and interests including the needs of English language learners. • are sensitive to concerns that affect learners and take advantage of community diversity, strengths, and resources for the welfare and success of all students. • create a learning environment in which diversity and individual differences are respected. • consider the impact of their own interactions with students and the interactions among students on classroom climate and student learning and development. • recognize and support the efforts of families to engage in the education of their children. 	<p>Standard 1b: The Candidate demonstrates knowledge of students to maximize learning.</p> <p>Standard 1c: The Candidate selects key knowledge and skills for instruction, considering a number of factors—the state standards, district curriculum, community expectations, and the needs of all students.</p> <p>Standard 2a: The Candidate creates a predictable and supportive environment of rapport and respect and promotes positive relationships with and among students.</p> <p>Standard 2b: The Candidate establishes a strong culture for learning that includes everyone becoming engaged in valuable academic pursuits.</p> <p>Standard 3a: The Candidate uses clear and accurate communication to engage students in learning.</p> <p>Standard 4c: The Candidate communicates with families/caregivers and includes them in all aspects of instruction and learning and informs them of classroom events, procedures, and grading systems.</p>

4.5 The Unit Assessment System

Angelo State University has developed an assessment system for the continuous assessment of its candidates and to measure the effectiveness of its Educator Preparation Program. This commitment to continuous assessment of progress and proficiency is demonstrated in a variety of ways and at various points in a candidate's program of study. Stakeholders can provide continuous guidance, mediation, and intervention for candidates by measuring knowledge, skills, and dispositions during the course of their programs.

Individual program areas have developed uniform assessments to augment the data already available for the continuous improvement of the Educator Preparation Program. Examples of these data are performance in capstone courses, employer surveys, or graduate follow-up surveys. Multiple measures ensure a comprehensive assessment of what candidates know and how the program contributes to their performance in the classroom (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

The Educator Preparation Program has five basic steps toward certification with different assessments and data collection at each of point in the system. Progress toward graduation and recommendation for certification are monitored at each step. Angelo State has the following paths leading to certification: Initial certification, Post-

baccalaureate initial certification, Certification for Other School Personnel, and Post-Master's specialized certification. In this section, the steps leading toward recommendation for initial certification are delineated. A chart representing the steps and assessments leading to initial certification recommendation is at the end of this section. The steps for other program categories are also contained in the narrative explanation.

University students and Educator Preparation Program Candidates are encouraged to use the Student Handbook and the Educator Preparation Program Student Handbook as references for information, policy, and procedures, especially related to assistance, support, and appeals.

Initial Certification: (Baccalaureate and post-Baccalaureate)

Step 1: Admission to the Educator Preparation Program

Students at Angelo State University who wish to pursue Educator Preparation begin the process at the completion of 60 undergraduate semester credit hours. The process to complete the first step to certification is meeting preadmission requirements, completing the application to enter the Educator Preparation Program, and being admitted as a candidate. Students become candidates once they have completed this step.

To be admitted to any Educator Preparation Program, Texas requires an assessment of basic skills and an evaluation of higher order thinking skills. Students must have an overall grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale on all college level course work. Students must meet the score requirements on state approved tests of basic skills. In addition, Angelo State students have to demonstrate reading, writing, mathematical, and oral communication skills by earning a C or better in prescribed courses. Students must also perform sufficiently well on one of the state approved tests of higher order thinking skills. Once students meet these requirements they are admitted into the Educator Preparation Program and become candidates eligible to enroll in upper division professional education course work. Students must also affirm that they will comply with the statement of commitment to professional dispositions required of all candidates in the program.

Step 2: Program Requirements

The next step in the assessment system is monitoring the candidate's progress through the preparation program. Continued development of competencies in knowledge, skills, and dispositions is assessed through candidates' experiences and achievement in their areas of preparation. Candidates are assessed in the area of planning and instruction through examination of products and skills. Dispositions are monitored by faculty observation, public school teacher evaluation, and self-reports by the candidates. All faculty and public school teacher mentors who work in the pedagogy area frequently assist students so that they can perform successfully in the areas of skills and dispositions. Candidates' products are submitted, reviewed, modified via an electronic submission support system with the final submission being archived in the electronic system.

Step 3: Internship Requirements

The Educator Preparation Program requires the candidate to perform satisfactorily in a number of field-based practica where knowledge, skills, dispositions, instructional decisions, student centered learning, and culturally responsive teaching are demonstrated. The candidate must continue to maintain the educator preparation program admission standards. Field placement occurs in a variety of diverse settings, in different schools, and at various grade levels. During these placements, the public school teacher is asked to evaluate the candidates' dispositions with regard to student learning and the candidates' interaction with other school professionals. Planning, organization, and teaching are emphasized and evaluated along dimensions of instructional decisions, student-centered learning, and culturally responsive teaching.

Step 4: Student Teaching

Another level in program assessment is for the candidate to apply, be accepted, and to student teach. Successful ongoing attention to requirements in steps 1, 2, and 3 prepare candidates to apply for the student teaching experience usually during the last semester of the program. Student teaching engages the candidates at this juncture for 15 weeks in a K-12 school setting following the same time requirements as the contracted teaching staff. Four different evaluations are conducted during student teaching. Each candidate is formally evaluated twice before the mid point in the semester and twice after, using rubrics aligned with the Texas Beginning Teacher Educator Support System (TxBESS). The TxBESS evaluation provides a systematic way to reflect upon and analyze the candidates' professional competencies and behaviors as these behaviors affect student learning. Candidates are assessed in areas addressing the implementation of appropriate content; instructional planning, preparation, and delivery, and assessment, including instructional decision-making. Monitoring, mentoring, and support are evident at this step.

Step 5: Recommendation for Certification

At the end of student teaching, candidates complete two state external examinations, one in content knowledge and one in pedagogical skills. The Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (TExES) are aligned with content standards for each level of schooling and with the state public school curriculum, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Candidates who successfully complete these examinations and graduate from Angelo State University are eligible for recommendation to the state of Texas for a standard teaching certificate.

Denial, Remediation, and Appeal Procedure

Failure to meet minimum standards at any point of assessment results in the candidate being referred to the Teacher Education Council's Admission, Retention, and Dismissal sub-committee. Reasons for denied admission may include, but are not limited to, not meeting minimum grade point requirements, not completing prerequisite coursework, not meeting stated application and progress deadlines, failure to commit to and demonstrate candidate dispositions, or a criminal history. The committee may impose a variety of interventions or sanctions including in some cases, dismissal from the program. Numerous programs exist on the university campus for candidates who are having difficulties and need assistance in improving performance in basic skills areas, academic

achievement, content area major course work, or pedagogy and field experiences. Candidates who fail to meet requirements at any step may seek assistance and advisement from program faculty, department heads of majors disciplines, the Dean of the College of Education, the Director of Field Experiences, or the Director of Certification. Candidates may appeal any decision to the Teacher Education Council's subcommittee on Admission, Retention, and Dismissal Committee.

Initial Certification Program for Post Baccalaureate Candidates

Post baccalaureate individuals follow the same sequence of events as others seeking initial certification with a few exceptions. The individual has usually completed the content area required courses and is recommended for a diagnostic examination using one of the state's content tests for certification. If the individual passes that examination no further preparation is required in the content area. If the individual fails the examination then the content department analyzes the transcript, score report, and the age of the course work and recommends additional preparation. An individual certification plan is prepared with appropriate content and pedagogy requirements listed. Candidates who fulfill these requirements, pass the appropriate examinations, and complete the educator preparation program are recommended to the state for a standard teaching certificate. Pedagogy requirements for certification may be completed at either the undergraduate or graduate level.

Certification for Other School Personnel

Master's degree level certifications programs are offered for specialization as School Counselors, Principals, Reading specialists, Superintendents, and Educational Diagnosticians. Each of these programs has standards of preparation that lead to professional certification for public school personnel. The following steps describe the general procedure that can be applied to each of the programs.

Step 1: Admission

The first step is to make application and be admitted to the graduate school at Angelo State. The standards for admission may be found in the university catalog. Once admitted the candidate is directed to a program advisor who prepares a degree plan.

Step 2: Compilation of evidence demonstrating standards competence

Candidates demonstrate competence in meeting specialized state and national standards through evidence-based assessment experiences for professional school personnel. Candidates prepare, submit, and reflect upon assignments and outcomes appropriate to the certification sought. Completed elements are assessed and materials demonstrating competence are electronically stored.

Step 3: Application for a site-based practicum

At the conclusion of the candidate's program a one or two semester practicum experience is required. Once candidates have been accepted for and placed in a practicum they are supervised by school personnel and a university faculty member. Candidates are assessed on their ability to create positive environments for student

learning; on their understanding of the developmental levels of students; on their ability to accommodate the diversity of students, families, and communities; and on the policy contexts of their work. Candidates are further assessed on the application of professional dispositions delineated in professional, state, and institutional standards. Candidates are expected to demonstrate interactions that are consistent with the ideal of fairness and the belief that all students can learn.

Step 4: Comprehensive review

At the completion of their programs and practica, candidates complete a comprehensive review of their experiences in the graduate program. Artifacts are aligned with standards demonstrating competency. A graduate advisory committee reviews the final submission and the candidate completes an oral comprehensive presentation. Advisory committee signatures attest to the candidates' completion of the requirements.

Step 5: Certification examinations

Candidates must pass the appropriate external state examinations. Once completed and the candidates have graduated, they are recommended to the state for the appropriate certification.

Post-master's level certification

Candidates who have completed an appropriate Master's degree may apply for a professional certification plan leading to specialized certification. The steps outlined above are required for certification but foundation coursework will have already been completed at the master's level. The candidates then complete the specialized content area coursework and experiences. When candidates have completed the appropriate preparation and passed the required external examinations, they are eligible for recommendation to the state for specialized certification as a school counselor, a school principal or superintendent, a reading specialist, or an educational diagnostician.

Assessing Candidate Dispositions

Candidates know the basis for the assessment of their performance in the Educator Preparation Program at Angelo State University through information communicated and demonstrated in the Educator Preparation Handbook and in individual program courses. Candidates must commit to and sign the Educator Preparation Program Candidate's Statement of Commitment Regarding Dispositions as a part of their application for admission to the program. Assessment of dispositions occurs both informally and formally in pedagogy courses and in field experiences as candidates progress through the program.

Faculty and classroom teachers provide feedback to candidates based on the assessment of their dispositions. If deemed necessary, faculty complete a "Candidate Concerns Form" if a candidate does not demonstrate or adhere to the professional dispositions expected in the program. A candidate may receive an alert in any Educator Preparation Program course, especially in courses with accompanying field experiences. A committee of program faculty reviews any circumstance where a candidate fails to meet criteria and arranges a conference with the individual candidate. The committee

resolves the concerns with the candidate or submits its information to the appropriate department head and/or dean for further action, including program dismissal deemed necessary.

Unit Assessment

The Unit is held accountable by the state of Texas. The Assessment System for Educator Preparation evaluates each teacher certification program annually. The program is evaluated by overall pass rate by all test takers, gender, and ethnicity with different pass rates required for initial tests takers and final test takers. In addition, each test is analyzed for its pass rate. Accreditation is by unit and by test. Failure to meet the established criteria can result in penalties from requiring a plan for program change to loss of the University's ability to recommend candidates for certification. The state also monitors the overall structure of the program, the delivery of the program, and the assessment used within the program.

Summary

The Angelo State University faculty supports our dynamic Educator Preparation Program with high expectations for all learners. Candidates are challenged to integrate content knowledge, pedagogical skills, professional dispositions, instructional decision-making, student-centered learning, and culturally relevant and responsive teaching to become effective practitioners in diverse learning communities. The Educator Preparation Program at Angelo State is preparing:

A

New

Generation of

Educators to

Lead

Others toward lifelong learning.

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