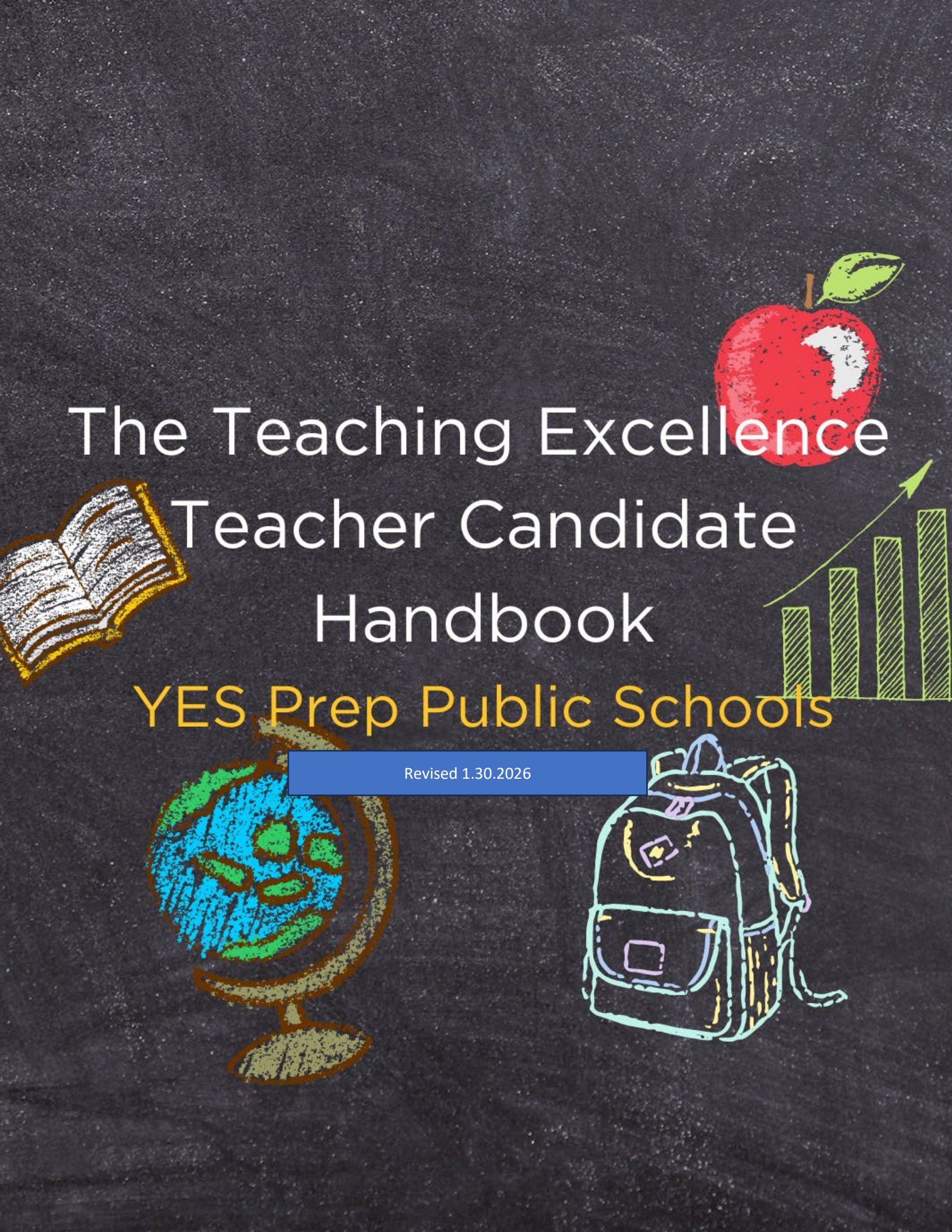

The Teaching Excellence Teacher Candidate Handbook

YES Prep Public Schools

Revised 1.30.2026

Contents

Welcome! 5
Contacts 6
Teaching Excellence Philosophy 7
Our Mission 7
Our Purpose 7
Program Overview 8
Core Development Experiences 8
Induction 8
In-Person Learning 8
Asynchronous Learning 8
Instructional Coaching 9
Certification 9
Admission Requirements 11
The Steps to Certification 14
Application 14
Evaluation 14
Program Acceptance 14
Instructional Courses 14
Certification Test(s) 14
Field-Based Experience 15
Your Intern (Teaching!) Year 15
Recommended for Certification 16
Teacher Development 18
Classroom Culture 18
Instructional Planning & Delivery 18
Data Driven Instruction 18
Teacher Leadership 18
Syllabus 18
Course Description Overview 18
Requirements 19
Courses 20
Instructional Courses 20
Observational Videos and Field-Based Experience 20
Objectives 20

Assignments 21
Instructional Coaching 21
Mentor Teachers 21
Certification Areas and Exams 23
Certification Areas 23
Supplemental Certificates for Specialized Teaching Areas 24
TExES Content Exams by Certification Area 24
Certification by Exam 26
Teachers Seeking Additional Certification While Enrolled in Teaching Excellence ACP 26
Program Costs 29
Our Program Fees 29
How our Payment Plan works 29
Other Program Fees 29
Certification Fees 29
Certification Fees – payable to SBEC (State Board of Education Certification) 30
Additional Fees 30
Professional Expectations 31
Code of Ethics 31
Dress Code 31
Professional Dispositions 32
Policies 35
Leave of Absence and Certification 35
Teachers on an Internship Certificate and serving in their Internship Year 35
Teachers not yet on an Internship Certificate and not serving in their Internship Year 35
Continued Support Costs and Leave of Absence 35
Certification Switch Policy 36
Late Assignments and Learning Modules 37
Missed Synchronous Learning and Coaching Touchpoints 37
Exit Policy 38
Resources 39
Financial Aid 39
Information Concerning Criminal Background Check 39
Important Links 40

Complaints.....40

Welcome!

Welcome to Teaching Excellence! Our goal is to make teacher certification as clear as possible for you. Because the path to certification can seem intimidating, our hope is that this guide breaks down for you the milestones you will accomplish and the steps you will need to take on your journey to becoming a Certified Teacher.

As you are making the decision to enroll in Teaching Excellence and as you navigate through our program, please use this guide—along with information from your Instructional Coach, the Teaching Excellence Certification Team, and your trainings—to help you gather the things you need to:

1. Enroll as quickly as possible

   and

2. Attain your Standard Certificate as quickly as possible

Once you have completed all admission requirements, you may be accepted into Teaching Excellence to begin programming. Once you have been accepted, it will be important for you to keep track of your progress through the program and have in mind the timeline for all state-required deliverables so that you may be certified in time.
We are excited to have you and welcome you into the Teaching Excellence family!



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Teaching Excellence Philosophy

For over a decade Teaching Excellence (TE) has existed to transform talent by providing exceptional coaching and professional development in order to accelerate teacher effectiveness. TE offers rigorous and relevant training, along with individualized coaching support, in order to increase teacher effectiveness and propel teachers' classrooms to new levels.

Proven and adopted by schools aiming for higher standards, Teaching Excellence has been responsible for the development and certification of thousands of teachers across Houston.

Our Vision

Teaching Excellence will be the Educator Certification and Preparation Program of choice for teachers striving to achieve certification and professional excellence through exemplary coaching and development.

Our Mission

Teaching Excellence (TE) transforms teacher effectiveness in year 1 by providing exceptional coaching, professional development, and a certification pathway in order to accelerate teacher effectiveness.

Our Purpose

Our core purpose is to accelerate teacher effectiveness. We believe exceptional coaching and professional development—culminating in certification— are the catalysts for this accelerated growth. Teaching Excellence programming aligns with district and campus priorities, ensuring that teacher effectiveness impacts achievement of our most important stakeholders—our students

Program Overview

The Teaching Excellence program is comprised of three main components: Instructional Coaching, Learning and Development, and Certification and Compliance.



Core Development Experiences

Teaching Excellence organizes its program around five core development experiences. These experiences serve as the vehicle for learning the foundational elements of effective teaching:

Induction

Induction is the foundation of teacher learning and development. The goal of Induction is for teachers to be prepared to set up a strong classroom culture, establish routines and procedures, and begin the work of planning and internalizing aligned lessons.

In-Person Learning

An immense amount of learning must take place to become an effective teacher. While Induction lays the foundation, this learning must continue over the course of the year. Teachers participate in in-person learning to continue developing their knowledge and skills around instructional best practices. These experiences provide opportunities not only for teachers to become aware of best practices, but also implement these practices in their work.

Asynchronous Learning

Online asynchronous learning provides teachers with exposure to a wide range of topics. These experiences are self-guided and may include reading and reflecting on an article, implementing high impact strategies into an upcoming lesson, or doing a case study on a student or group of students. These experiences will help teachers connect the work they're doing in their classrooms to the learning they receive in-person through TE and their campus and district while also helping them progress

towards certification.

Instructional Coaching

Instructional coaching is the cornerstone of the Teaching Excellence Program. Each Teaching Excellence Instructional Coach works with a cohort of about 18 teachers. The relatively small size of cohorts allows for frequent and regular touch points throughout the year. Through observations and debriefs and a variety of other methods, Instructional Coaches provide individualized support that is tailored to the specific needs of their teachers.

Certification

The core development experiences listed above serve two purposes: First, they provide multiple avenues for novice teachers to master the foundational elements of teaching. Second, with formal admission, each contributes to the requirements necessary to obtain a standard teaching certificate in the State of Texas. The certification team of the Teaching Excellence Program provides certification candidates with guidance around timelines, test preparation, and costs associated with certification. Additionally, individualized updates are provided throughout the year to inform candidates of their progress towards obtaining a Texas Standard Certificate.

COMPLETION OF TEACHING EXCELLENCE INCLUDES

1

SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE AND FULFILL ALL REQUIREMENTS OF TEACHING EXCELLENCE COURSEWORK AND...

2

TEST IN THREE CATEGORIES

1. **Content**: This is your primary teaching field. This is chosen by Teaching Excellence based on your transcript and college coursework.
2. **Supplemental**: Tests such as the ESL, Bilingual, and Sciene of Teaching Reading (STR) are required for certain content areas. **Content** and **Supplemental Exams** are required for your Internship.
3. **Pedagogy**: All canddiates are required to take the PPR exam prior to being issued their Standard Teaching Certificate.

3

INTERNSHIP

Obtain a teaching placement for one year and engage in Instructional Coaching and Observations as well as Teacher Development days.

4

GET YOUR CERTIFICATION!

Once you have started your intership year, you must complete all internship program requirements and state requirements before you earn your certification. This includes all instructional coursework, certification tests, successful field experience and balance paid in full.

Admission Requirements

- Admission requirements to an alternative certification program come from Texas Administrative Code (**19 TAC §227.10)**
- You must meet requirements for a certification area in addition to meeting basic admission requirements.



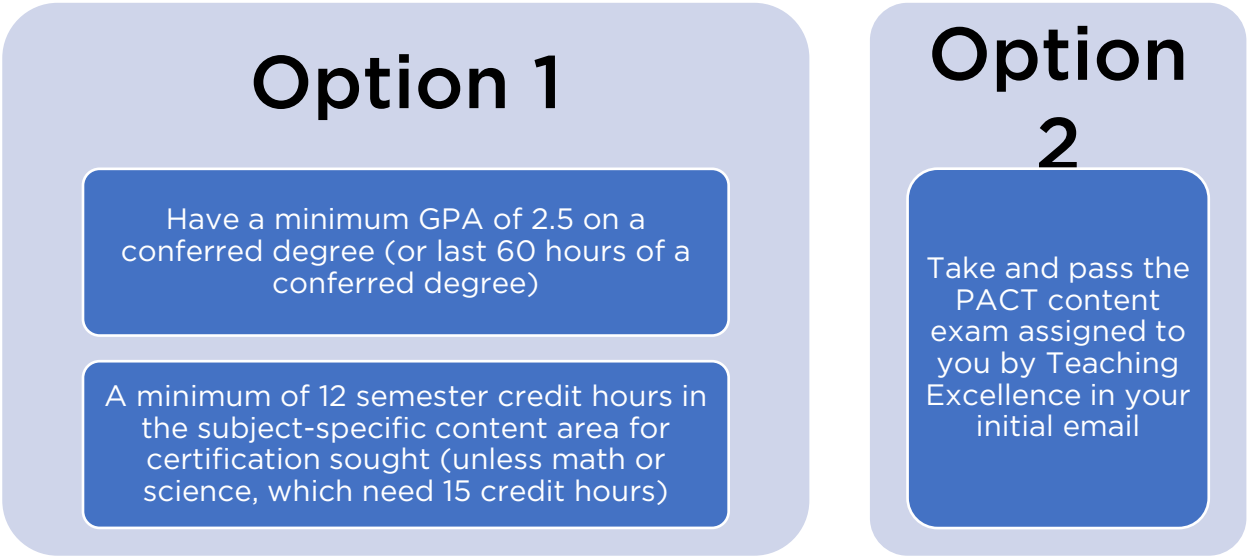
- You must have an email account and access to a computer.
- You must complete your Candidate Profile.
    - **Bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education as required by Texas Education Agency and the Texas Administration Code**
        - *****You can view all regionally accredited institutions in the United States on the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) website.
        - *You may be Formally Admitted before you receive your conferred degree, and Teaching Excellence must receive evidence of your conferred degree prior to the end of your first semester in our program. Failure to produce this artifact will result in removal from the program.
    - **Official transcript and a conferred degree***
        - Your graduating GPA must be calculated and posted by the university on your official transcripts. If your transcript does not reflect a graduation GPA, you will need to contact your college's Registrar office to have a letter typed on university letterhead that includes your GPA sent in with your official transcripts
        - You may be Formally Admitted before you receive your conferred degree, and Teaching Excellence must receive evidence of your conferred degree prior to the end of your first semester in our program. Failure to produce this artifact will result in removal from the program.
    - **Minimum 2.50 grade point average, which will be determined in one of the following ways:**
        - Minimum 2.50 GPA (your undergraduate GPA as posted on conferred degree transcript) or
        - Minimum 2.50 GPA in last 60 hours
    - **In addition to meeting the basic admissions requirements, you must also meet requirements to be certified in a content area.**
        - Teaching Excellence will determine in which content area you are eligible for certification during your application and transcript review. Only one content area may be identified for admissions. If you hold a degree in a specific content area, Teaching Excellence will identify this before any other content areas based on state requirements:
            - 12 – 15 transcript hours in identified content areas (hours required vary by content);

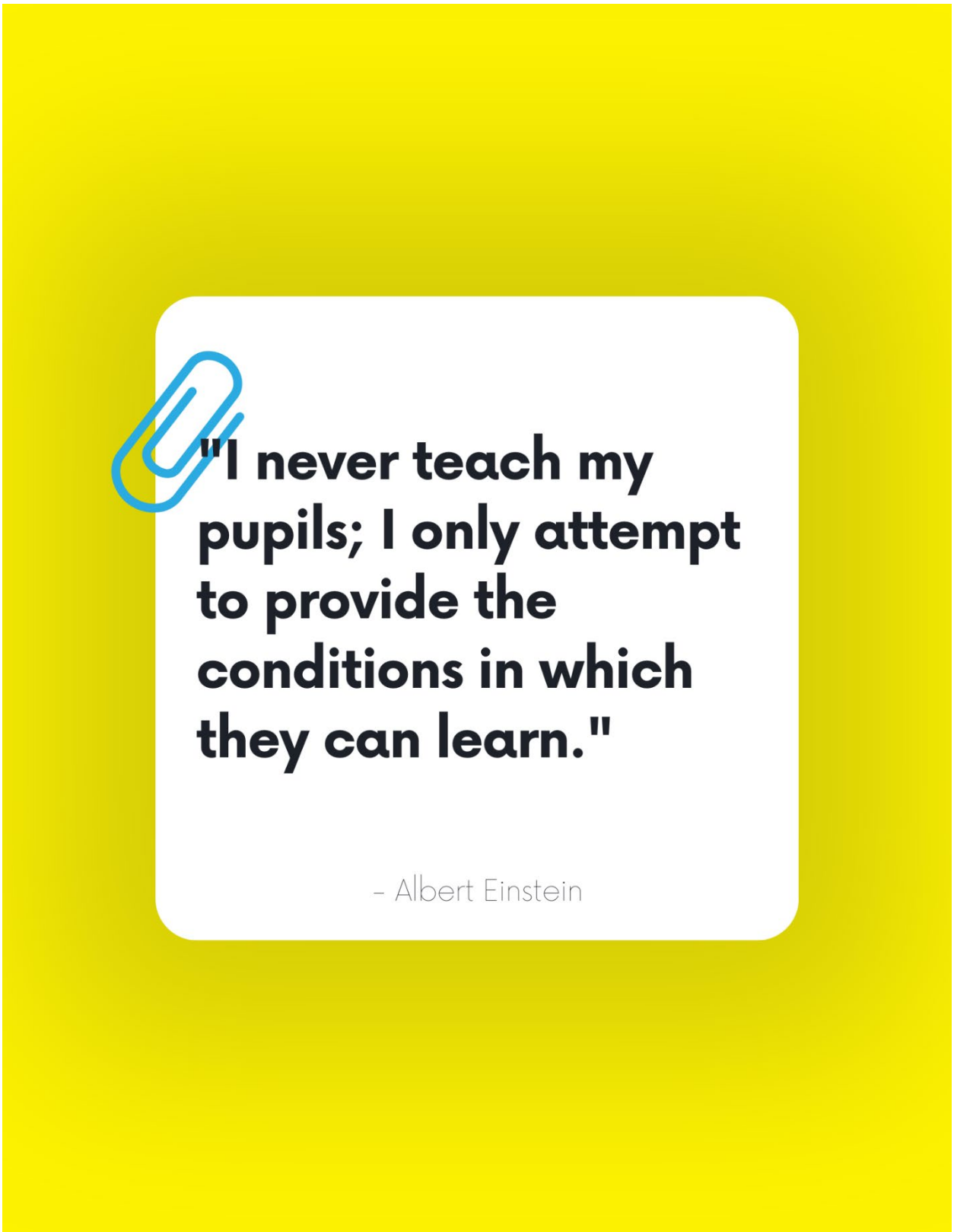
or

- TXPACT Test
  - The TXPACT test may be required if transcript credits are inconclusive, or if your minimum GPA is not met.

If you take and pass the appropriate PACT exam, Teaching Excellence is not guaranteeing you pass your TExES Content Exam. Since these admission requirements are mandated by the state and affect all Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs), passing the PACT exam in the subject area that you are interested in teaching will bring your one step closer to your certification, and you will also need to engage in a Content Exam preparation program to learn the content knowledge needed for your TExES Content Exam.

Formal Admission is only final when communicated to you directly by your Certification Program, which has the ultimate discretion on which exams and credit hours will be accepted towards the Formal Admission requirements.




"I never teach my pupils; I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn."
- Albert Einstein

The Steps to Certification

Application

You don't need to pay anything to Teaching Excellence to start your application process. Follow the steps below to get going!

1. Complete your Candidate Profile – The Candidate Profile Form will be used to collect demographic and applicant information as part of the enrollment process and will be submitted to the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The TEA collects this information from every certification program as part of their mandated state reporting.

2. Submit an Electronic Transcript - Submit your official electronic transcripts to teaching.excellence@yesprep.org and/or employeetranscripts@yesprep.org.
**If you are currently finishing your bachelor's degree, you do not have to submit a transcript with a degree conferred/awarded date at this time, BUT you are still required to provide an up to date transcript from your college or university.*

Evaluation

After your application and transcript are received, you will receive notification of your program status by a Teaching Excellence TEam member. Upon acceptance into the program, you will receive an Admission Packet.

Program Acceptance

In order to be officially enrolled and admitted into Teaching Excellence, you will need to complete and sign the Admission Packet. Once accepted into the program, you will have access to test certification prep materials, as well as online learning modules that will count towards your 150 hours of pre-service requirements.

Instructional Courses

You will attend Induction after being admitted into Teaching Excellence. Depending on when you are admitted, Induction may fall during the summer or during Fall Semester of the school year.

Before Induction, you have pre-work to complete in preparation. This will be assigned to you after your formal admission, and should be submitted prior to the start of Induction.

Certification Test(s)

A content area based on your teaching placement will be identified for you when you apply to Teaching Excellence. You are not required to seek certification in the identified content area, but instead may request what other certification area(s) you are interested in pursuing.

- If you are seeking special education certification, you may need to pass a specific content area test, i.e., Core Subjects EC–6 or Core Subjects 4–8 to indicate content mastery of a core content area.
- If pursuing certification in Early Childhood PK-3, Core EC-6, Core 4-8, and/or English Language Arts and Reading 4-8, the Science of Teaching Reading test must be passed to be eligible for certification. If your primary area of certification is one of the aforementioned, please be aware that you must pass the STR exam in addition to content test.
- You take the TExES Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities test (PPR) only after you:
- Pass the appropriate content test
- Complete all pre-service hours and courses *and* complete the required PPR test prep.

Field-Based Experience

In order to begin your internship, you must complete at least 50 total hours of classroom observations and reflections.

If you have been placed in a teaching assignment for 30 consecutive days after your admission into TE, or if you were placed in a teaching assignment for 30 consecutive days up to two years before your admission, a combination of teaching experience can satisfy up to 40 hours of your Field-Based Experience requirement. Your principal or school administrator will need to fill out paperwork confirming your eligibility, and you will need to complete the required reflection concerning this experience.



Your Intern (Teaching!) Year

You must teach for one full year in a teaching assignment aligned with your certification area before you can earn a standard certificate. During this time, you will fulfill many requirements including:

- 5 formal observations completed by your Instructional Coach
- Informal observations completed by your Instructional Coach
- Completion of a Teacher Mentor and Mentee program (you're the Mentee!)
- Completion of the hours remaining of your 300 required learning and coaching hours
- Completion of payment for Teaching Excellence

Recommended for Certification

You are recommended for a Standard Certificate after successfully fulfilling the following program requirements:
Completing the instructional courses

- Passing the required certification tests: a content test or tests (and Bilingual Target Language Proficiency ESL Test [BTLPT] and Bilingual Supplement Test if applicable), and the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities test (PPR)
- Completing the field experience with recommendation from your Instructional Coach and campus administrator
- Completing all programming hours (that's 300 hours!)
- Paying all program fees

REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST

On the path to certification

- [ ] Apply for Teaching Excellence
- [ ] Submit Official Transcripts
  teaching.Excellence@yesprep.org
- [ ] Complete Formal Admission Packet
- [ ] Complete pre-service requirements
- [ ] Take and pass Content Exam(s)
- [ ] Internship year! And complete all intern coursework
- [ ] Take and pass PPR

yes!

Teacher Development

Our core purpose is to accelerate teacher effectiveness. We believe exceptional coaching and professional development are the catalysts for this accelerated growth. Teaching Excellence's Instructional Coaches partner with system-wide staff and campus Instructional Leaders to align feedback and support. It is this aligned feedback that drives teachers to implement best practices, which results in student achievement. We focus on the Four Core Areas of Development:

Classroom Culture

We believe that a strong classroom culture is dependent on a strong behavior management system, consistent routines and procedures, and building transformative relationships with students and families.

Instructional Planning & Delivery

We develop teachers to utilize research-based planning and instructional methods, ensuring students are being exposed to and mastering content in the most effective way possible.

Data Driven Instruction

Instructional Coaches partner with teachers to assess their effectiveness based on how students are performing in their classrooms. By taking a data-driven approach, we ensure that teachers are aware of students' needs and adjusting their instruction accordingly.

Teacher Leadership

Instructional Coaches assist teachers in building the skills needed to be a leader both inside and outside the classroom. We encourage teachers to advocate for themselves and their students. Over the course of the year, Instructional Coaches aid teachers in becoming reflective practitioners who propel their own growth in the classroom.

Syllabus

Course Description Overview

Teaching Excellence coursework is designed to first and foremost empower novice teachers. Candidates can expect to develop both personally and in their educational craft through the Teaching Excellence coursework. What sets Teaching Excellence coursework apart is the strong emphasis on practice, feedback, reflection, and collaboration in order to develop each candidate with excellence. Through your studies in the Teaching Excellence Coursework, you will develop the knowledge, skills, and mindsets necessary for developing engaging & rigorous instruction, creating an inclusive learning environment, and becoming a confident and student-centered teacher leader.

Courses and Their Domains	
Pre-Service Course	Welcome to Teaching Excellence
	Pre-Induction Assignments
	Demonstrate Pedagogical Proficiency 101
	Plan Effective Instruction 101
	Deliver instruction with impact 101
	Build Classroom Culture 101
	Develop Professional Practice 101
Semester One Course	Teacher Portfolio
	Demonstrate Pedagogical Proficiency 102
	Plan Effective Instruction 102
	Deliver instruction with impact 102
	Build Classroom Culture 102
	Develop Professional Practice 102
Semester Two Course	Demonstrate Pedagogical Proficiency 103
	Plan Effective Instruction 103
	Deliver instruction with impact 103
	Build Classroom Culture 103
	Develop Professional Practice 103



Requirements

Teaching Excellence coursework occurs both in-person and asynchronously (via deliverables you submit). Candidates are required to attend all in-person learning,

including Induction and Teacher Development Days. Any absences, late arrival to, or early departure from in-person learning will be documented and may impact a teacher's path to certification. For online learning, candidates must have a work or personal computer that has access to a strong internet connection. Candidates are required to complete all assigned asynchronous learning modules.

Courses

Instructional Courses

Courses are split into three tracts:

- Pre-Service Course
- Semester One Course (Fall)
- Semester Two Course (Spring)

Courses contain both synchronous in-person learning and asynchronous online learning. Teachers are expected to complete all coursework for each course in order to gain certification approval by Teaching Excellence ACP. All courses have been designed to fulfill the state's requirements for certification programming as outlined in the Texas Administrative Code (TAC).

Observational Videos and Field-Based Experience

A library of observational videos is available to our candidates throughout enrollment in the Teaching Excellence program. These videos represent a variety of grade levels, content areas, and programs teachers may be certifying in. The purpose of these videos is to lift up best teaching practices and allow teachers to see what is true of effective classroom practice. Additionally, in-person Field-Based Experience opportunities will be communicated to admitted candidates when applicable.

Objectives

The objectives of Teaching Excellence course are to Accelerate Teacher Effectiveness. Courses fall into three domains: Instructional Planning and Delivery, Culture of Learning, and Teacher Leadership and Development. Instructional Planning and Delivery course work is designed for teachers to develop the skills they need to plan and deliver the academic content they are teaching. In Culture of Learning courses teachers develop and practice the skills and mindsets that allow them to lead their classrooms and foster a positive culture where students can invest fully in learning. Teacher Leadership and Development domain is where teachers enhance skills and mindsets necessary to have positive impact as a leader in and outside their classroom.

Assignments

Assignments from Teaching Excellence are generally communicated via email and via an in-person roll-out of the assignment (and then housed in Schoology). All assignments are aligned to state readiness standards for teaching and serve the purpose of deepening the candidate's understanding of the art and craft of teaching.



At Teaching Excellence, we value quality work; it is critical to the successful completion of Teaching Excellence programming that any and all work be of the caliber required for graduate level coursework. Imagine you're back in college or grad school—we expect your best work, here!

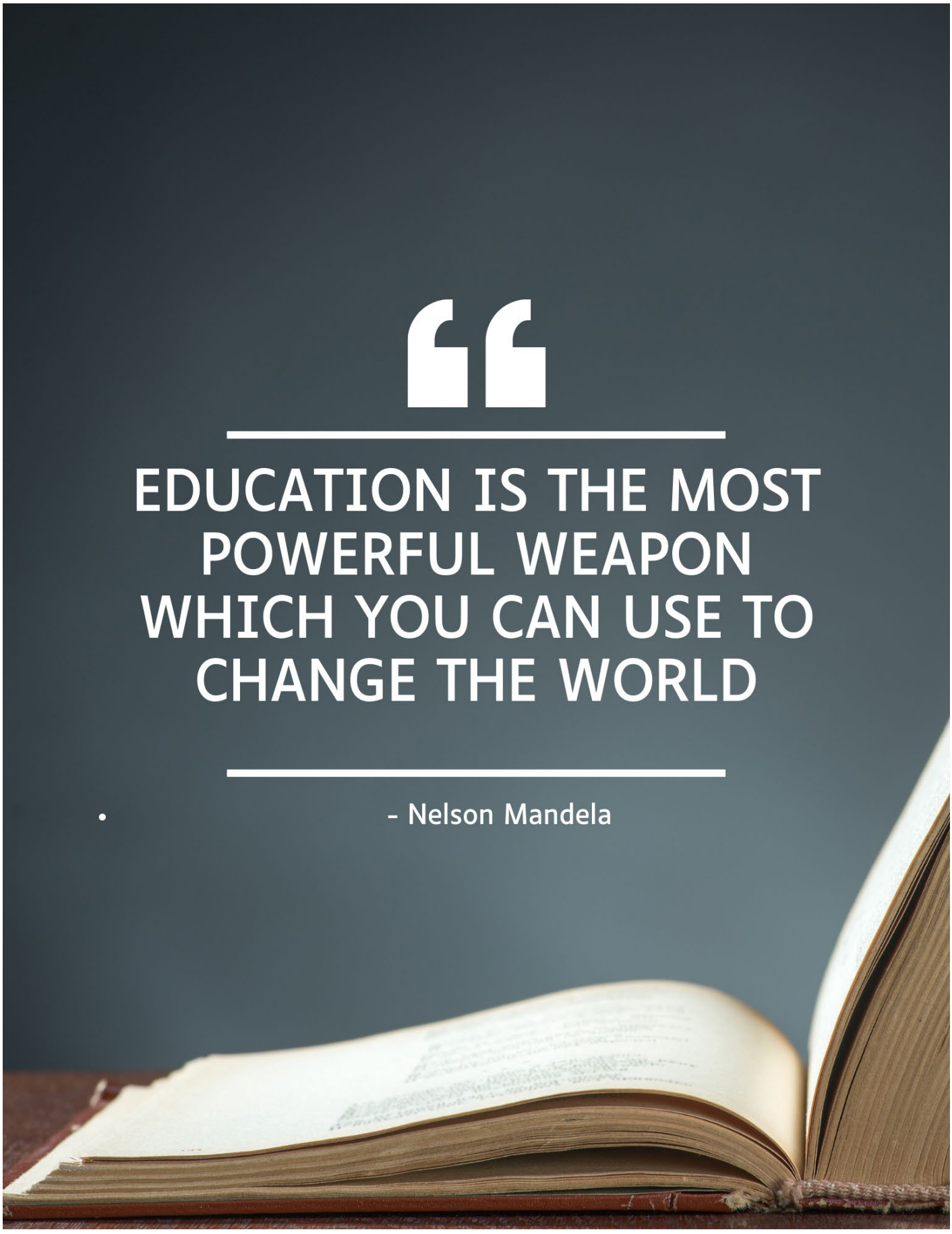
Assignments will be reviewed, and feedback will be given as applicable. Any assignment not meeting the program's high standards will be returned. Once the requirements for a specific course are complete, you will be advanced to the next course at the appropriate time. While you wait to be advanced, please spend some time reflecting and conducting individual research on each course.

Instructional Coaching

Instructional coaching is the cornerstone of the Teaching Excellence Program. Each Teaching Excellence Instructional Coach works with a cohort of about 18 teachers. The relatively small size of cohorts allows for frequent and regular touch points throughout the year. Through observations and debriefs and a variety of other methods, Instructional Coaches provide individualized support that is tailored to the specific needs of their teachers.

Mentor Teachers

All Teaching Excellence candidates pursuing certification will be assigned a Mentor Teacher. The Mentor Teacher is a knowledgeable, experienced, highly proficient teacher who works with and alongside you as you learn the ropes of teaching. A mentor is not an instructor, and the candidate is not a student – he or she is a colleague. Mentors know a great deal about teaching and learning, students, parents and the school, which often leads to a kind of practical wisdom that can't be printed in a book – this knowledge and know-how is invaluable to new teachers. Mentor Teachers also act as a support system you can lean on when times get tough—and, knowing they've been through the certification process, too, means that your Mentor Teacher can help guide you through your journey!


EDUCATION IS THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON WHICH YOU CAN USE TO CHANGE THE WORLD
- Nelson Mandela

Certification Areas and Exams

Certification Areas

Teaching Excellence offers teacher certification in the following content areas. View the content areas from the list below to view specific requirements and the subjects that can be taught by the specific certification. Please note: it's always best practice to follow up with your campus administration and school leader to determine your teacher placement based on your certification area. These General Teacher Placements noted below are nonspecific to individual campuses.

Certification Area	General Teaching Placements
Art EC-12	Art
Core Subjects 4-8	Middle School ELA, Science, Math, and Social Studies
Core Subjects EC-6	6th Grade ELA, Science, Math, and Social Studies
Dance 6-12	High School Dance
Early Childhood EC-3	Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten - 3rd Grade
ELAR 4-8	Middle School ELA, M.S. Reading Intervention (first choice is Core Subjects 4-8)
ELAR 7-12	High School ELA, Seminar, H.S. Reading Intervention, College Counseling
History 7-12	7-12 History
LOTE French EC-12	MS or HS French
LOTE Mandarin Chinese EC-12	MS or HS Chinese
LOTE Spanish EC-12	MS or HS Spanish
Life Science 7-12	Grades 7-12 Biology or Ecology (first choice is Science 7-12)
Math 4-8	MS Math (not Algebra), MS Math Intervention (first choice is Core Subjects 4-8)
Math 7-12	High School Math, Algebra, HS Math Intervention
Music EC-12	MS or HS Music, Orchestra, Choir
Physical Education EC-12	MS or HS PE (this certification area does not cover Health electives)

Physical Science 6-12	MS or HS Physics or Chemistry (first choice is Science 7-12)
Science 4-8	Middle School Science (first choice is Core Subjects 4-8)
Social Studies 4-8	Middle School Social Studies (first choice is Core Subjects 4-8)
Social Studies 7-12	High School Social Studies
Special Education EC-12	Learning Lab Specialist, MS or HS Special Education Inclusion, SpEd Self-Contained Classrooms will also need a Core Certificate
Technology Applications EC-12	Computer Lab
Theatre EC-12	MS or HS Theatre

Supplemental Certificates for Specialized Teaching Areas

Supplemental certificates fall into two categories:

1. For teachers seeking certification in Bilingual and Special Education, these supplemental certification areas are required.
2. For all other teachers, Bilingual, ESL, and Special Education certification areas may be added *after* issuance of the Standard Certificate upon completion of Teaching Excellence ACP.

Supplemental certificates are noted below.

Supplemental Certification Area	General Teaching Placements
Bilingual	Bilingual education teacher
ESL	Any teacher responsible for the ELAR instruction of Emergent Bilingual students

TExES Content Exams by Certification Area

The following content exam(s) are required for teachers to take and pass prior to issuance of intern certificate for the following certification areas.

Please note: If a teacher is not seeking their intern certification in a Bilingual Classroom or Special Education classroom, they may choose to add the Bilingual or Special Education supplemental after issuance of their initial Standard Certificate in their Certification Area. Teachers who are seeking their intern certification in Bilingual

or Special Education classroom **must** pass their Bilingual Content Exams and Special Education Content Exams prior to issuance of their intern certificate.

Certification Area	TExES Content Exam(s) Required
Art EC-12	178 Art EC-12
Bilingual EC-3	190 BLPLT 164 Bilingual Supplemental 292 Early Childhood-3 293 STR
Bilingual EC-6	190 BLPLT 164 Bilingual Supplemental 293 STR 391 Core Subjects EC-6
Core Subjects 4-8	211 Core Subjects 4-8 293 STR 154 ESL *ELAR teachers
Core Subjects EC-6	391 Core Subjects EC-6 293 STR 154 ESL *ELAR teachers
Dance 6-12	279 Dance 6-12
Early Childhood EC-3	292 EC Childhood EC-3 293 STR
ELAR 4-8	217 English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR) 4-8 293 STR 154 ESL
ELAR 7-12	331 English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR) 7-12 154 ESL
History 7-12	233 History 7-12
LOTE French EC-12	610 Languages Other Than English (LOTE) French
LOTE Mandarin Chinese EC-12	ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview ACTFL Written Proficiency Test
LOTE Spanish EC-12	613 Languages other English (LOTE) Spanish
Life Science 7-12	238-Life Science 7-12

Math 4-8	115 Mathematics 4-8
Math 7-12	235 Mathematics 7-12
Music EC-12	177 Music EC-12
Physical Education EC-12	158 Physical Education EC-12
Physical Science 6-12	237 Physical Science 6-12 TExES
Science 4-8	116 Science 4-8
Social Studies 4-8	116 Social Studies 4-8
Social Studies 7-12	232 Social Studies 7-12
Special Education EC-12	186 Special Education Specialist EC-12
Special Education EC-12 and Core Subjects EC -6	186 Special Education Specialist EC-12 391 Core Subjects EC-6 293 Science of Teaching Reading (STR)
Technology Applications EC-12	242 Technology Applications EC-12
Theatre EC-12	180 Theatre EC-12

Certification by Exam

Upon completion of Teaching Excellence ACP programming and after a teacher receives their Standard Certificate from the state, a teacher may choose to add additional certification(s) by exam. The process for certification by exam is outlined on the state's website here.

The state does **not** permit teachers to seek certification by exam in Early Childhood (Prekindergarten)-Grade 3.

Once a teacher has received their Standard Certificate, the teacher will not be required to gain test approval by Teaching Excellence for additional certifications by exam.

Teachers Seeking Additional Certification While Enrolled in Teaching Excellence ACP

Teachers who seek an additional certification while enrolled in Teaching Excellence ACP (ex: A Science 7-12 teacher also wants to earn a certification in History 7-12) will **not** be granted test approval. Teaching Excellence programming does not support

teachers seeking initial certification in multiple certification areas outside of their teaching placement. Teachers may instead complete a certification by exam after issuance of their primary Standard Certificate (in this case, the teacher would gain certification in Science 7-12 and then take a History 7-12 certification by exam).

STUDY

SCHEDULE

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Priorities

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Notes

- ----------
- ----------
- ----------
- ----------
- ----------
- ----------

Program Costs

Teaching Excellence fees are broken down below, including costs for programming and certification.

Our Program Fees

Teaching Excellence cost for the candidate is $5,000; the candidate's district (YES Prep) also incurs costs associated with the candidate's participation in the program.

All program fees are non-refundable. This is the anticipated cost for a candidate who completes all Teaching Excellence program requirements according to the program timeline.

How our Payment Plan works

1) Semi-monthly Payment Plan of $249.95: Teaching Excellence costs are deducted from semi-monthly paychecks over a total of 20 deductions for Professional Learning and Coaching Support ($4,999 total).

2) The first two deductions comprise an initial $500 mandatory programming deposit. This deposit is required of all candidates who are admitted into the program. If a candidate is removed from the program due to voluntary request or withdrawn due to the program's removal policy before the second paycheck deduction, the $500 mandatory programming deposit is still collected through scheduled deductions and/or a lump sum payment from the candidate.

3) Teachers who do not meet the expected timeline for initial certificate issuance (two or three issuance windows, depending on certificate area) will incur continued support costs when they become eligible for initial certificate issuance. These costs are $1500 for a full school year, paid through twenty (20) payroll deductions of $75 each.

A candidate who was formally admitted to TE and then removed may be eligible to return to TE, depending on the reasons for removal. However applicants seeking re-admission to TE will be subject to the same costs and program completion requirements as a new TE applicant. Exceptions will only be made if a teacher is returning within six semesters of their first formal admission date and seeking admission the same certification area where they left off.

Other Program Fees

Certification Fees

TExES (cost per examination).....$116 - $136
You must pass required content exam(s) prior to to being recommended to the state for certification.
Examination fees payable to Education Testing Services.

Certification Fees – payable to SBEC (State Board of Education Certification)

Intern/Probationary Certificate Fee.....$78
Standard Certificate Fee.....$78

Additional Fees

If you do not complete the program requirements in the given timelines, it may delay your certification timeline, and you may be required to pay continued support costs.

Continued Support Fee.....$750/semester or $1500/school year

Professional Expectations

Teaching Excellence expects that all teacher candidates demonstrate the highest ethical standards at all times. This component of the Teaching Excellence Teacher Candidate Guide outlines Teaching Excellence's position on ethical behavior and professional expectations. Failure to comply with these expectations may result in immediate removal from the Teaching Excellence ACP and its programming.

Code of Ethics

The Educators' Code of Ethics is set forth in Texas Administrative Code to provide rules for standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community.

All educators pursuing certification and professional development through Teaching Excellence ACP shall comply with the following Code of Ethics from the Texas Educator Preamble:

The Texas Educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct towards students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom. The Teas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty and good moral character. The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The Texas educator, in accepting a position of public trust, shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The Texas educator, in accepting a position of public trust, shall measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of their potential as an effective citizen. The Texas educator, in fulfilling responsibilities in the community, shall cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community.

Please go to TAC 247.1 – 247.2 – Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators for more information about Code of Ethics and the Texas Administrative Code.

Dress Code

Teaching Excellence standard attire across all locations is smart casual, unless a different dress code is communicated in advance. In addition to making sure we are always appropriately dressed; we are also ensuring that we are creating an environment conducive to safe working
conditions. Clothing, shoes, and accessories should not constitute a safety hazard. While on YES Prep property, TE candidates are required to display their campus badge.
Candidates whose clothing leads to a disruption of the work environment, may be asked to change, sent home for the day, or face other corrective action

Professional Dispositions

Serving as a teacher is more than knowing your educational content, systematic planning, and instructing students. Serving as a teacher entails a wide range of responsibilities and roles. Teachers are not only facilitators of learning but also advocates for their students. They plan and deliver lessons, create educational materials, and assess student progress. They establish a positive and inclusive classroom environment, promoting a love for learning and encouraging student engagement. Teachers also collaborate with colleagues, parents, and the community to ensure the holistic development of their students. They provide guidance and support, address individual needs, and foster social and emotional growth. Additionally, teachers participate in professional development activities, stay updated with educational advancements, and continuously reflect on their teaching practices to improve their effectiveness.

All of these beliefs and practices can be summarized by the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) as **Professional Dispositions.** Professional dispositions are defined by the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) as "the habits of professional action and moral commitments that underlie an educator's performance". Professional dispositions refer to the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that are expected of educators in their professional practice. These dispositions are essential for creating a positive learning environment and fostering the academic and personal growth of students.

At Teaching Excellence ACP, we are focused on seven Professional Dispositions and the development of these dispositions in our Teacher Candidates. Please see the seven Professional Dispositions of Teaching Excellence ACP on the next page.

Commitment to Learning	Educators should demonstrate a commitment to their own continuous learning and professional development. They engage in ongoing reflection and seek opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills to improve their teaching practices.
Ethical and Professional Behavior	Educators exhibit integrity, honesty, and ethical behavior in all aspects of their work. They maintain confidentiality, respect diversity, and adhere to professional standards and codes of conduct.
Respect for Students	Educators value and respect the individuality, cultural backgrounds, and diverse needs of their students. They create a safe and inclusive environment that fosters mutual respect and dignity.
Collaboration and Collegiality	Educators collaborate with colleagues, parents, and the community to support student learning and well-being. They actively participate in professional learning communities and contribute to the collective goals of the educational institution.
Reflective Practice	Educators engage in self-reflection and assessment of their teaching practices. They seek feedback, analyze student outcomes, and make adjustments to improve instructional strategies and meet the diverse needs of their students.
Effective Communication	Educators possess strong communication skills, both verbal and written. They communicate effectively with students, parents, colleagues, and other stakeholders, maintaining open lines of communication to support student success.
Professionalism	Educators demonstrate professionalism by being punctual, prepared, and organized. They fulfill their responsibilities and commitments, meet deadlines, and maintain a positive and respectful demeanor in all professional interactions.

During coursework and in campus and field experiences, Teaching Excellence ACP staff will assess the candidate's demonstration of these professional dispositions and provide feedback to facilitate progress. Should a candidate demonstrate unsatisfactory professional dispositions, the following procedure will be followed:

1. Initial Written Warning. The candidate will receive a written warning by Teaching Excellence ACP, issued to the teacher. Campus leader or central office stakeholders may be copied on this written warning.
2. Second Written Warning. The candidate will receive a written warning by Teaching Excellence ACP, issued to the teacher. Campus leader or central office stakeholders may be copied on this written warning.
3. Third and Final Warning. The candidate will receive a third and final warning by Teaching Excellence ACP, issued to the teacher and copying their Principal and/or HR or Talent team. Upon the receipt of a third and final warning, teacher candidates are to indicate their understanding that further lack of adherence to the Professional Dispositions will result in removal from the Teaching Excellence ACP.

For more information about removal from ACP programming, you may view the Exit Policy subchapter found in the Policies chapter of this Candidate Guide.

Policies

Leave of Absence and Certification

Per the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), a prolonged (more than 30 school day) leave of absence—including maternity leave—may delay a teacher's path to certification, depending on where that teacher is in their certification journey. See below for more details..

Teachers on an Internship Certificate and serving in their Internship Year

If a teacher is serving on their internship certificate for their intern year and misses more than 30 school days, the teacher must repeat their entire internship year. Per the **19 TAC 228.35(e)(2)(B) Internship.** An internship must be for a **minimum of one full school year** for the classroom teacher assignment or assignments that match the certification category or categories for which the candidate is prepared by the EPP.

(i) An EPP may permit an internship of up to 30 school days fewer than the minimum if due to maternity leave, military leave, illness, bereavement, or if the late hire date is after the first day of the school year.

If the candidate is out longer or for reasons not covered by TAC, the entire year must be repeated. Should the teacher's internship certificate expire prior to completion of the intern year, the teacher will need to apply and pay the fee for the internship certificate.

Teachers who anticipate a prolonged absence will need to contact Teaching.Excellence@yesprep.org and communicate their dates of absence. The Teaching Excellence Certification Team will determine the best path forward for the candidate based on information provided. Note: Continued Support Costs for the additional internship year may be accrued based on individual teacher circumstance. Teachers who would have required Continued Support Costs for Year 2 due to outstanding programming unrelated to their leave will be required to pay Continued Support Costs during their repeated internship year. Teachers who would not have required Continued Support Costs for Year 2 outside of programming missed during their leave will not be required to pay Continued Support Costs during their repeated internship year.

Teachers not yet on an Internship Certificate and not serving in their Internship Year

Teachers who are not serving on an Internship Certificate will experience a delay in certification unless they are able to make up programming and coursework missed during their leave, prior to the conclusion of Year 1 in Teaching Excellence ACP. This may include—and not be limited to—delay of Intern Certificate issuance by one or two semesters.

Continued Support Costs and Leave of Absence

Teachers who anticipate a prolonged absence will need to contact Teaching.Excellence@yesprep.org and communicate their dates of absence. The

Teaching Excellence Certification Team will determine the best path forward for the candidate based on information provided.

Continued Support Costs for the additional internship or programming year (Year 2) may be accrued based on individual teacher circumstance. Teachers who would have required Continued Support Costs for Year 2 due to outstanding programming unrelated to their leave will be required to pay Continued Support Costs during their repeated internship year or Year 2 of programming. Teachers who would not have required Continue Support costs for Year 2 outside of programming missed during their leave will not be required to pay Continued Support Costs during their repeated internship year or Year 2 of programming.

Certification Switch Policy

A formally admitted teacher enrolled at Teaching Excellence requesting to switch certification areas (e.g., Mathematics 4-8 to Science 4-8) must meet three requirements to gain approval for switching:

1. **The teacher must obtain written approval for the switch from the teacher's current Principal.** This written approval must be submitted to Teaching.Excellence@yesprep.org by the Principal.
2. **The teacher must meet the content knowledge requirement for the new certification area in one or more of the following ways**:
    a. Credit Hours: Teacher's Official Transcript shows successful completion of 15 credit hours for Secondary Math and Science certification areas or 12 credit hours for all other certification areas in the coursework related to the new certification area from an accredited Institute of Higher Education.
    b. PACT Exam: Teacher has a passing score on the PACT exam for the new certification area. You can find a list of PACT exams for certification areas on the Pearson site here (click PACT).
3. **The teacher must acknowledge via email confirmation that new programming and Professional Learning requirements will have to be completed as a result of the certification area switch**.
    a. A teacher switching certification areas will be communicated an overview of new or different Professional Learning and/or programming that will need to be completed under the new certification area.
    b. Final say of what programming will be required under the new certification area will be determined by the Director of Certification and Evaluation and the Director of New Teacher Development.
    c. Example: A teacher moving from a Mathematics 4-8 certification to a Science 4-8 certification would have to complete all Induction sessions in the Instructional Planning and Delivery Core Development Area related to Science 4-8 content (even if the teacher previously completed all Induction hours under the previous certification area).

Teaching Excellence Certification Team holds final approval of all certification area switches.

Switching certification areas does not exempt or change established timelines set by TE

Agreement, Cost Verification, and Commitment to Completion documents signed at formal admission.

A teacher switching certification areas is still subject to Continued Support Costs per the timeline established at formal admission to Teaching Excellence

Late Assignments and Learning Modules

It is imperative for candidates to stay on track with completing all assignments, including learning modules. Failure to complete assignments and learning modules by their deadline may result in a delay of certification. Any delay in certification due to a candidate's failure to meet assignments and deadlines may result in Continued Support Costs to be paid by the candidate, or removal from the Teaching Excellence ACP.

Candidates who do not submit on-time assignments and learning module will be required to attend summer or weekend programming to account for missed learning hours and content. Missed or late assignments may also result in a Written Warning for lack of adherence to Teaching Excellence ACP's Professional Dispositions.

Missed Synchronous Learning and Coaching Touchpoints

All missed synchronous learning (example: Induction, Teacher Development Sessions) will result in mandatory in-person synchronous make-up sessions. These make-up sessions will be communicated throughout the year. The state requires teachers meet both the minimum 300 learning hour requirement *and* fulfill all learning outlined per the TAC for their certification area. Missing synchronous learning jeopardizes a teacher's ability to meet the learning requirements outlined by the state. Additionally, attendance to in-person synchronous learning will be communicated to Principals and other stakeholders invested in the teacher's certification progress.

Teachers will engage in one-on-one coaching with their Instructional Coach throughout their Year 1 of Teaching Excellence ACP programming. It's a professional courtesy to notify your Instructional Coach if you need to reschedule a coaching

session. Failure to notify your Instructional Coach of your absence may result in you forfeiting that coaching touchpoint with your Instructional Coach and may result in required in-person attendance to make-up synchronous learning days to account for the missed development opportunity.

Missed synchronous learning and Coaching Touchpoints without prior communication or an approved plan for making up the professional learning opportunity may result in a Written Warning for lack of adherence to Teaching Excellence ACP's Professional Dispositions.

Exit Policy

The state requires all Educator Preparation Programs (EPP) to have an exit policy for the dismissal of candidates that is published, reviewed, and signed by candidates when they are admitted to the program. The requirement is found in 19 TAC §228.20(h).

Teaching Excellence participants may be removed from the Teaching Excellence Alternative Certification Program (TE ACP) when candidates demonstrate behavior inconsistent with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions expected of teachers and leaders in Texas. Dismissal from the program may be based on grounds including but not limited to:

1. Failure to meet coursework requirements
2. Failure to abide by policies and/or procedures established by the Teaching Excellence ACP and/or program requirements established by the State Board for Educator Certification as published in the Texas Administrative Code.
3. Failure to abide by the Teaching Excellence ACP's Section B: TEacher Agreement policies and expectations.
4. Any action deemed a violation of the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators, and/or;
5. Any action deemed a violation of Teaching Excellence's Code of Conduct; and/or;
6. Any action deemed a violation of school district and/or campus policy during field-based experiences, clinical teaching, internship, or practicum.
7. Failure to complete Teaching Excellence and TEA certification expectations after 6 semesters.

Should a Candidate be removed from the Teaching Excellence Alternative Certification Program (TE ACP):

1. The Candidate's campus leader and/or HR team may be notified;
2. The Candidate shall forfeit all sums of money paid to *TE ACP* during the 2023-2024 school year;
3. The Candidate shall not be eligible for certification through the Alternative Certification Program of Teaching Excellence, unless and until the Candidate is rehired, formally admitted, and successfully completes and pays for another full year of Teaching Excellence;

Candidates may be removed from the Teaching Excellence ACP before or after a First, Second, or Third Written Warning depending on the severity of the violation or offense.



Resources

Financial Aid

The Texas Education Agency has financial aid opportunities linked to their site. You can access that information here: https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/certification/initial-certification/financial-resources-for-teacher-training.

Teaching Excellence ACP does not currently offer scholarship or financial aid for candidates. Our partner district, YES Prep Public Schools, may offer stipends or incentives that vary year to year depending on organizational priorities.

Information Concerning Criminal Background Check

Under Texas law, teachers in public schools and applicants for a Texas educator certificate must undergo a criminal history background check prior to employment as an educator. An individual who has been convicted of an offense may be ineligible for issuance of a certificate.
A person has the right to request a "preliminary Criminal History Evaluation" from TEA regarding potential ineligibility for certification due to a conviction or deferred

adjudication for a felony or misdemeanor offense. Rules related to eligibility in relation to criminal offenses are prescribed in 19 TAC **§249.16**.

Important Links

TEAL/ECOS Login
TEA Help Desk
TEA Testing Information
Teaching Excellence ACP Candidate Portal

Complaints

The process for complaints regarding Teaching Excellence is available on our website or directly linked here.