McMURRY UNIVERSITY

EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM (EPP) HANDBOOK

This handbook comprises McMurry University's Educator Preparation Program (EPP) information, requirements, and policies. It is intended to support students as they proceed through the program, prepare to apply to the McMurry EPP, and complete educator certification requirements.

The McMurry University Educator Preparation Program is accredited by the Texas Education Agency.

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McMURRY UNIVERSITY

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Section 1: McMurry Educator Preparation Program Overview

Welcome to the McMurry University Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educator Preparation Program (EPP). Our passionate faculty and staff are here to guide you each step of the way as you begin your journey to become an educator. We take pride in supporting your growth as a successful teacher through our curriculum, designed to develop your pedagogical, intellectual, and ethical competencies.

You will graduate with not only a robust foundation in educational learning theories, but you will also cultivate the skills necessary to meet the needs of our diverse student communities. We also believe that you will be inspired to reach your greatest potential through our strong emphasis on excellence, leadership, and virtue in a Christian environment.

Explore our program offerings to learn more about our innovative curriculum and instruction studies.

Accreditation and Program Performance

TAC §227 and TEC §21.044

The McMurry Educator Preparation Program (EPP) provides field-based experiences in school settings to support teacher candidates as they connect theory and practice, observe effective teaching practices, interact with diverse populations, and develop their teaching skills in close interaction with classroom teachers and university faculty. The McMurry EPP has been recognized with state accreditation.

The McMurry Educator Preparation Program (EPP) offers degree programs to prepare Texas certified teachers. Graduates of the McMurry EPP meet state licensure requirements established by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Texas State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC). The McMurry EPP was first accredited by the TEA in September 1970 and maintains accreditation. The most recent Continuing Approval Compliance Audit was conducted in August 2022. The McMurry Educator Program's next program review will be conducted in 2026-2027. Accreditation ratings are issued annually and are available on the TEA Accountability System for Educator Preparation webpage.

Candidates of the McMurry Teacher Education Preparation Program have consistently demonstrated a high level of achievement on the certification exams.



McMurry EPP TEA Accreditation Ratings	
2025-2026	Accredited
2024-2025	Accredited
2023-2024	Accredited
2022-2023	Accredited
2021-2022	Accredited
2020-2021	Not Rated: Declared State Disaster
2019-2020	Not Rated: Declared State Disaster
2018-2019	Accredited
2017-2018	Accredited
2016-2017	Accredited

McMurry University Educator Preparation Program Consumer Information

TEC §21

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) posts information about the state's educator preparation programs, including McMurry, on their website: Consumer Information about Texas Educator Preparation Programs.

Supply and Demand of Texas Educators

TEC §21, TAC §227.1

The supply and demand of certified teachers in Texas vary by subject area, geographic region, and grade level. Understanding these trends helps candidates make informed decisions about certification pathways and job prospects.

- The Texas Education Agency (TEA) annually reports teacher shortage areas based on statewide hiring needs and retention patterns.
- High-demand areas typically include the following but vary on a yearly basis:
    - Bilingual
    - English as a Second Language (ESL)
    - Special Education
    - Career and Technical Education (CTE)

These shortage areas may qualify teachers for certain benefits, such as loan forgiveness programs through federal or state initiatives. The Texas Education Agency provides additional information at https://tea.texas.gov/educators/certification/student-loan-forgiveness-teachers.

TEA Educator Skills and Responsibilities

TAC §149

The McMurry Educator Preparation Program prepares teacher candidates in teaching content proficiency, instructional pedagogy, and professional disposition. The TEA Commissioner's Rules Concerning Educator Standards presents the following teacher standards that are addressed throughout our program.

Standard 1--Instructional Planning and Delivery. Teachers demonstrate their understanding of instructional planning and delivery by providing standards-based, data-driven, differentiated instruction that engages students, makes appropriate use of technology, and makes learning relevant for today's learners.

Standard 2--Knowledge of Students and Student Learning. Teachers work to ensure high levels of learning, social-emotional development, and achievement outcomes for all students, taking into consideration each student's educational and developmental backgrounds and focusing on each student's needs.

Standard 3--Content Knowledge and Expertise. Teachers exhibit a comprehensive understanding of their content, discipline, and related pedagogy as demonstrated through the quality of the design and execution of lessons and their ability to match objectives and activities to relevant state standards.

Standard 4--Learning Environment. Teachers interact with students in respectful ways at all times, maintaining a physically and emotionally safe, supportive learning environment that is characterized by efficient and effective routines, clear expectations for student behavior, and organization that maximizes student learning.

Standard 5--Data-Driven Practice. Teachers use formal and informal methods to assess student growth aligned to instructional goals and course objectives and regularly review and analyze multiple sources of data to measure student progress and adjust instructional strategies and content delivery as needed.

Standard 6--Professional Practices and Responsibilities. Teachers consistently hold themselves to a high standard for individual development, pursue leadership opportunities, collaborate with other educational professionals, communicate regularly with stakeholders, maintain professional relationships, comply with all campus and school district policies, and conduct themselves ethically and with integrity.

Professional Ethics and Responsibilities

McMurry University Educator Preparation Program (EPP) students complete a focused review of teachers' ethical and professional expectations in CURR 3302 The Inclusive Classroom. This includes the required TEA Ethics content. McMurry EPP applicants must sign an affirmation form to confirm acknowledgment of these expectations. Professional disposition feedback is provided throughout all coursework in the McMurry EPP.

Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators

TAC §247.2

(1) Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices and Performance.

(A) Standard 1.1. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district, educational institution, educator preparation program, the Texas Education Agency, or the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and its certification process.

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

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

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

(E) Standard 1.5. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or that are used to obtain special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents of students, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(N) Standard 1.14. The educator shall comply with the prohibitions on diversity, equity, and inclusion duties in the Texas Education Code (TEC) §11.005

(O) Standard 1.15. The educator shall comply with the prohibitions on assistance with social transitioning in TEC, §11.401

(P) Standard 1.16. The educator shall comply with the restrictions on instruction regarding sexual orientation and gender identity in TEC, §28.0043.

(Q) Standard 1.17. The educator shall comply with the requirements to provide full information to a parent concerning a student in TEC, §26.008

(R) Standard 1.18. The educator shall not promote, advocate, or encourage, in a manner that is reasonably accessible or visible to students, illegal conduct:
(i) described by TEC, §22A.201(a); or
(ii) directly related to student behavior or school property.

(2) Ethical Conduct Toward Professional Colleagues.

(A) Standard 2.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

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

(C) Standard 2.3. The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.

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

(E) Standard 2.5. The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, family status, or sexual orientation.

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

(G) Standard 2.7. The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC or who provides information for a disciplinary investigation or proceeding under this chapter.

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

(3) Ethical Conduct Toward Students.

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

(B) Standard 3.2. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly treat a student or minor in a manner that adversely affects or endangers the learning, physical health, mental health, or safety of the student or minor.

(C) Standard 3.3. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent facts regarding a student.

(D) Standard 3.4. The educator shall not exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, national origin, religion, family status, or sexual orientation.

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

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

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

(H) Standard 3.8. The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator-student relationships and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard. Factors that may be considered in context and on the totality of the circumstances in assessing whether appropriate boundaries were maintained include, but are not limited to:

(i) physical proximity or physical contact beyond the professional role or that the student has indicated is unwelcome, unless such contact is professionally required;

(ii) contacting or meeting the student beyond the professional role or making efforts to gain access to or time alone with a student with no discernable professional purpose;

(iii) transporting the student without permission from the student's legal guardian or in violation of school board policy, unless for an emergency

(iv) taking or possessing a photo or video of the student beyond the professional role or in violation of school board policy; and

(v) showing favoritism or isolation through gifts, rewards, or privileges.

(I) Standard 3.9. The educator shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including, but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging, blogging, or other social network communication. Factors that may be considered in context and on the totality of the circumstances in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:

(i) the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;

(ii) the subject matter of the communication;

(iii) whether the communication was made openly, or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;

(iv) whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;

(v) whether the communication was sexually explicit;

(vi) whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student; and

(vii) whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as threatening the welfare and/or safety of the student.

Section 2: McMurry Educator Preparation Program Rules and Policies

Admission Requirements

TAC §227.1, §227.10

The Curriculum and Instruction faculty and the University's Education Advisory Council (EAC) consider several factors in making the decision about an individual's admission to the Educator Preparation Program (EPP). All students who plan to seek a degree that includes Texas educator certification must formally apply and be admitted. Students may not enroll in specified courses without official EPP admission. During the course, CURR 3300 Foundations of Learning and Development, students are given instructions about the application process. If a student does not take CURR 3300 at McMurry University, Curriculum and Instruction faculty will assist with the application process.

Admission requirements are informed by the Texas Administrative Code and the McMurry University EPP.

Undergraduate admission requirements:

- Enrollment at McMurry University
- Minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 or higher
- Minimum of 12 completed credit hours in the content area associated with the intended certification or a minimum of 15 credit hours for math and science candidates
- Meet college readiness criteria in reading, writing, and mathematics as indicated by the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) *See Appendix A for more information.
- English language proficiency
- Satisfactory program interview
- Review of candidacy by the McMurry University Curriculum and Instruction faculty and affirmative vote by the Education Advisory Council (EAC)

FasTrack admission requirements:

- Earned bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher education
- Minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 or higher
- Minimum of 12 completed credit hours in the content area associated with the intended certification or a minimum of 15 credit hours for math and science candidates
    - FasTrack applicants may satisfy this content area requirement by passing the PACT (Pre-Admission Content Test). Contact the Director of the FasTrack program for more information.
- English language proficiency
- Satisfactory program interview
- Review of candidacy by the McMurry University Curriculum and Instruction faculty, including extenuating circumstances that may warrant further consideration

Note that any period of inactivity that requires a candidate to reapply for admission to McMurry University shall also require the candidate to reapply for admission to McMurry University's Educator Preparation Program (EPP).

Dismissal from the McMurry Educator Preparation Program (EPP)

TAC §228

McMurry University acknowledges a responsibility to prepare and certify candidates who will be effective educators. Evidence of potential effectiveness includes academic, dispositional, and professional qualities.

Candidates must apply and be accepted to the McMurry Educator Preparation Program prior to enrollment in designated professional development courses. McMurry EPP application requirements must be met at the point of application and maintained throughout the remainder of the program. Candidates are continuously assessed for academic proficiency as well as professional disposition. A candidate may be dismissed if they fail to meet the program's academic standards or if concerns arise regarding their suitability for the teaching profession. Acceptance to McMurry's EPP permits advancement toward certification but does not guarantee program continuance or acceptance to clinical teaching.

Reasons candidates may be dismissed from McMurry University's EPP include, but are not limited to the following:

- Cumulative GPA falls below 2.75 for more than two consecutive semesters
- Failure to meet coursework requirements
- Overall score of "Unacceptable" on two or more professional disposition benchmarks
- Any action deemed a violation of the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas educators
- Failure to abide by policies or procedures established by the McMurry Educator Preparation Program and/or requirements established by the State Board of Educator Certification as published in the Texas Administrative Code
- A criminal background check that impedes field placement
- Failure to complete all certification requirements within two years of clinical teaching placement
- Significant changes in the standards or test requirements for the certification field in which the candidate was prepared due to any period of inactivity
- Any conduct determined to violate the McMurry University Student Code of Conduct, including, but not limited to, the falsification of Educator Preparation Program (EPP) documents or records, and verified instances of cheating, plagiarism, or other academic misconduct
- Any action deemed a violation of a school district or campus policy during field-based experiences, clinical teaching or internship

Candidate Disciplinary Procedures

When area(s) of concern is/are identified, the candidate will receive written notification of a required meeting to address the concern(s).

- The candidate, the candidate's Curriculum and Instruction instructor/supervisor, and the Curriculum and Instruction Department Chair will attend.
- If deemed appropriate, a growth plan or other support will be determined in order to allow improvement in the specified area(s). The plan will include evidence of expected outcome(s), steps for improvement, and a measurable timeline.
- The Curriculum and Instruction faculty will meet to review the support plan and determine if dismissal is warranted.
- In case of dismissal, the candidate will be notified in writing. If the candidate wishes to appeal the decision, he/she may contact the McMurry Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) within 10 days of notification.

In the McMurry Educator Preparation Program Application, all applicants agree to the following statement:

EXIT POLICY FOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

A candidate may be dismissed from the McMurry University Educator Preparation Program (EPP) for failure to meet program requirements, professional or ethical standards, university policies, or applicable Texas educator preparation or certification requirements. Grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to:

- Cumulative GPA falls below 2.75 for more than two consecutive semesters higher
- Failure to meet coursework requirements
- Overall score of "Unacceptable" on two or more professional disposition benchmarks
- A violation of the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators
- Failure to comply with McMurry University EPP policies or procedures or applicable requirements established by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and published in the Texas Administrative Code
- Criminal history that prevents or substantially impedes placement in a required field-based experience, clinical teaching, or internship
- Failure to complete all certification requirements within two years of clinical teaching placement
- Significant changes in the standards or test requirements for the certification field in which the candidate was prepared due to any period of inactivity
- Conduct that violates the McMurry University Student Code of Conduct, including, but not limited to, falsification of EPP documents or records, cheating, plagiarism, or other verified academic misconduct
- Violation of applicable school district or placement-site policies, procedures, or requirements during field-based experiences, clinical teaching, or internship
- Failure to meet established EPP benchmarks or other requirements for continued participation in the program

Dismissal from the EPP shall be determined by the McMurry University Educator Preparation Program faculty committee in accordance with applicable EPP and McMurry University policies and procedures. A candidate may appeal a dismissal decision in accordance with McMurry University's applicable appeal procedures.

_____ _____

Signature of Candidate Date

Criminal History Evaluation

TAC §227

The McMurry University Educator Preparation Program (EPP) is required by the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) to inform applicants and candidates that criminal history may affect eligibility for Texas educator certification and employment and may affect participation in field-based experiences or clinical teaching. The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) considers criminal history when determining eligibility for educator certification under 19 TAC §249.16. A conviction, deferred adjudication, or other criminal history may result in denial of certification or other action by SBEC. Completion of an educator preparation program does not guarantee eligibility for or issuance of a Texas educator certificate.

Individuals who are enrolled or planning to enroll in an educator preparation program or who plan to take an examination for initial educator certification, and who have reason to believe they may be ineligible for certification because of a felony or misdemeanor conviction or deferred adjudication, may request a Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation (PCHE) from the Texas Education Agency (TEA). A PCHE is a voluntary, non-binding evaluation of potential eligibility for educator certification based on the information provided by the individual and a name-based Texas criminal history review. The current fee is $50 and is non-refundable. A PCHE does not replace the national criminal history background check required when applying for certification. A favorable PCHE does not guarantee admission to or placement in field experiences or clinical teaching because school districts and other placement sites may establish their own requirements.

Voluntary Withdrawal from the McMurry Educator Preparation Program

If at any point after EPP acceptance, and prior to program completion, a candidate wishes to complete the McMurry degree without certification, he/she must first contact the Curriculum and Instruction Department Chair to determine how degree requirements will be impacted. If major/minor change is approved, the candidate shall write an email to the McMurry Certification Officer indicating intent to withdraw from the EPP. The candidate will then contact their academic advisor for options to graduate under a new degree plan.

Transfer to Another Educator Preparation Program

A teacher candidate may not be enrolled in only one educator preparation program (EPP) at a time. If a candidate wishes to change programs once he/she has been admitted to an approved EPP leading to certification in Texas, a candidate transfer form must be completed. Candidates have the right to transfer from one program to another, provided they have not completed the program requirements and are in good standing with the releasing program. All fees, tuition, coursework, etc., required by the receiving program are the responsibility of the candidate. The program transfer form is retained by both programs and must be submitted through the Certification Officer for processing. The official form to transfer can be found at Program Provider Resources page on the TEA website.

Section 3: McMurry Educator Preparation Program Curriculum

Program Completion Requirements

TAC §228

Program completion requirements are informed by the Texas Administrative Code and the McMurry Educator Preparation Program. These criteria are reflected in the degree and course requirements:

- Ability to pass the criminal history background checks required of field experience sites (schools and community organizations)
- Successful completion of all coursework listed on the degree plan (minimum grades noted on syllabi)
- Demonstration of the dispositions expected of professional educators
- Demonstration of the content knowledge associated with the intended certification area
- Demonstration of pedagogical skills
- Successful completion of Field-Based Experiences (FBEs) associated with pedagogy coursework (required hours, assignments, and evaluation criteria and instruments are referenced in the course syllabi)
- Successful completion of clinical teaching/internship (attendance requirements, evaluation criteria, and instruments are referenced in the course syllabi)

Note: Per 19 TAC §228.2, a candidate who has successfully completed all of the criteria listed above in this section will be labeled as "completer" (also referred to as "finisher"). Passing the required certification exams is not a criterion that must be satisfied for this distinction. However, successful completion of all initial certification exams is required for Standard Certification. Additionally, completion of all required certification exams is a program requirement prior to clinical experience approval.

Degree Plans and Course Requirements

The McMurry Educator Preparation Program prepares teacher candidates in the Traditional Program at the undergraduate level and in the Alternative Program at the post-graduate level. The McMurry University catalog provides detailed information and degree plans. Students may also access their records and monitor their coursework progression on MyMcM.

Undergraduate Students: Curriculum

McMurry students should declare their majors/minors upon admission to the university. Degree plans and completed coursework are available on MyMcM. Current degree plans are also available on the McMurry website.

Elementary Teaching Certification (Early Childhood – 6th grade).

Undergraduate students complete a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education and minor in Curriculum & Instruction.

- Core Subjects (EC-6) with Science of Teaching Reading

Secondary Teaching Certification (4th – 8th grade).

Secondary teacher candidates major in the discipline in which they plan to certify and minor in Curriculum & Instruction.

- English Language Arts & Reading
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies

Secondary Teaching Certification (7th – 12th grade).

Secondary teacher candidates major in the discipline in which they plan to certify and minor in Curriculum & Instruction.

- Chemistry
- English Language Arts & Reading
- History
- Life Science/Biology
- Mathematics
- Physical Science (grades 6-12)
- Science
- Social Studies

All-Level Teaching Certification (EC – 12th grade).

All-level teacher candidates major in the discipline in which they plan to certify and minor in Curriculum & Instruction.

- Art
- Music
- Physical Education/Kinesiology
- Spanish
- Theatre Arts

Curriculum and Instruction/"Professional Development" Course Overview

TAC §228

Admission to the McMurry Educator Preparation Program (EPP) identifies students as certification candidates and allows registration in the curriculum & instruction courses noted as "professional development courses." Candidates must complete all courses prior to clinical teaching. The professional development courses combine theory with practice and require a significant fieldwork component including assessment of content knowledge, teaching practices, and professional disposition. As of the 2026-27 academic year the following courses are considered "professional development courses:" CURR 3302, 4194, 4198, 4600 (for all grade level certifications), 4121, 4331, 4332, (for Early Childhood-6th) 4125, 4334, 4335 (for EC-12, 4-8, 6-12, 7-12).

The professional development courses are identified in the university catalog. Candidates must earn a minimum grade of C in each of the identified courses or must repeat the course to advance. While the candidate's professional disposition is assessed throughout the program, a particular emphasis is presented in the professional development courses. Additionally, in order to demonstrate readiness to begin clinical experience, candidates must earn a final grade of B- or higher in their courses referred to as "Block." The Block semester includes three integrated courses (7 credit hours) focused on methods and management, planning and assessment, and professional development schools.

State law requires teacher candidates to complete Field-Based Experiences (FBEs) prior to clinical teaching/internship. FBE hours are fulfilled as part of curriculum & instruction coursework requirements. In field placements, candidates are expected to develop and deliver an instructional plan, observe, and support classroom management, assess student learning, and to work collaboratively with classroom teacher(s). Background checks, processed by the school/district, are required prior to beginning the field placement.

McMurry Aides to Teachers (A2T) Program

The McMurry Aides to Teachers program provides individuals working as paraprofessionals a pathway to earn a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education and EC-6 Texas Teacher Certification. Eligibility requirements include acceptance to McMurry University and verification of employment as a paraprofessional in a TEA accredited school. Completion of the program requires acceptance to and successful completion of all required courses in the McMurry EPP. Courses for this program are online and face-to-face. Refer to the Director of Aides to Teachers Program on page 4 of this handbook for more information.

McMurry Educator Preparation Program Certification of Professional Programs Disclosure

McMurry University has been approved to participate in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA). Additional information and relevant links can be found at https://mcm.edu/about-mcmurry/accreditations/.

McMurry Educator Preparation Program Timeline

TAC §228

At McMurry University, students have the opportunity to select from a range of courses, allowing them to pursue a degree that reflects their individual interests while also meeting institutional and state requirements. As a result, the sequence of events outlined in the timeline below may vary from student to student and is intended to serve as a general overview of the degree and certification process.

Formal Program Benchmarks that must be met to continue in the Educator Preparation Program path to certification are italicized with asterisks.

- First 2 - 4 Semesters
  Students pursuing a bachelor's degree with an education major or minor typically focus on completing general education requirements during their first two to four semesters.
- Enrollment in CURR 3300 (typically at the end of Year 2 or beginning of Year 3)
  - By Week 12: Complete the **Student Self-Evaluation 1*
  - By Week 12: Complete and **apply for admission to the McMurry University Educator Preparation Program*
  - By Week 15: Participate in an **interview* with a faculty member from the Department of Curriculum and Instruction as part of the EPP admission process
  - Post-Semester (Approximately 7–10 Days After Grades Are Posted): The Education Advisory Council (EAC) reviews applications and votes on admission decisions
  - Note: Aides to Teachers (A2T) transfer students who are not required to take CURR 3300 will complete **Student Self-Evaluation 1* with the A2T Program Director at their initial advisory meeting.
- Enrollment in CURR 3302
  - By Week 15: Complete the **Teacher Disposition Benchmark 1* and **Student Self-Evaluation 2*
  - By Week 15: Complete **15+ Field-Based Experience (FBE) hours* and submit all required reflections and documentation
  - By Week 15: S Complete *State-Mandated Trainings in *Youth Mental Health, *Suicide Prevention, the *Texas Educators' Code of Ethics*
- Enrollment in CURR 3342
  - By Week 15: All students seeking certification in grade clusters other than EC-6 complete **State-Mandated Dyslexia Training*
- Enrollment in READ 3300
  - By Week 15: All students seeking EC-6 certification complete **State-Mandated Dyslexia Training*

- Enrollment in "Block"
  The Block semester includes three integrated courses (7 credit hours) focused on instructional methods, classroom management, and professional development schools. This block must be completed in the semester immediately preceding clinical teaching. For elementary certification, "Block" courses consist of CURR 4121, 4331, and 4332. Secondary "Block" courses consist of CURR 4125, 4334, and 4335.
  - By Week 8: Submit the application to begin clinical experience in the following semester
  - By Week 15: Complete the **Teacher Disposition Benchmark 2* and **Student Self-Evaluation 3*
  - By Week 15: Complete **50+ Field-Based Experience (FBE) hours* and submit all required reflections and documentation
  - Prior to beginning clinical experience, candidates should have **completed all coursework* in their certification content area as well as **mandatory trainings* per TAC.

  Note: Given the intensive nature of the Block semester, past candidates have recommended beginning exam preparation during the preceding break (e.g., summer or winter break). This is strongly encouraged and arranged by Block instructors.
- Enrollment in Clinical Experience and/or Seminar
  - At least 14 calendar days before the first day of clinical experience: Students must have passed all official TExES exams or obtained formal approval to begin clinical teaching prior to completing exams.
  - During Weeks 1, 12, and 15 of the Clinical Teaching semester: The Certification Officer will provide guidance on the standard teacher certification application process, Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credits, certifications by exam, and certification renewal

McMurry Educator Preparation Program Benchmarks

Program benchmarks are points throughout the preparation process where candidates are assessed for progress toward completing Educator Preparation Program (EPP) requirements (e.g., admission, passing a specific course or courses, passing a certification exam, completing preservice requirements).

Program Admissions

- GPA, application, pre-requisite courses

Field Based Experience (FBE)

- 50 hours minimum of targeted observations
- Detailed reflection assignment of each FBE and identifies educational practices observed and experienced

Professional Disposition

- Satisfactory Scores on Teacher Disposition Benchmarks 1, 2, and 3
- Satisfactory Scores on Student Self-Evaluations 2 and 3
- Zero professional disposition concerns from McMurry Curriculum & Instruction Faculty, Host Teacher / Mentor / Cooperating Teacher, Campus Administrator, Field Supervisor, or Educator Preparation Program including Educator Preparation Services.
- Zero violations of the Texas Educator Code of Conduct
- Zero infractions to the University Student Code of Conduct

Certification Exams

- Candidates must score 80% or higher on practice certification exams to be allowed to take official TExES exams
- All certification exams must be passed prior to clinical experience
- All mandatory trainings per TAC must be completed prior to clinical experience

Section 4: Clinical Experience

The Director of Clinical Teaching and Director of FasTrack provide all clinical experience requirements directly to candidates. The information provided in this EPP Handbook is for overview only.

NOTE

General Information about Clinical Experience

TAC§228

The McMurry University Educator Preparation Program (EPP) provides two methods for candidates to meet the clinical experience requirement in Texas. Undergraduate candidates complete the clinical experience requirement through Clinical Teaching. Candidates who have completed a bachelor's degree may choose to meet clinical experience requirement by successfully completing clinical teaching or internship. Clinical experience is the final stage of candidates' certification preparation. In collaboration with our partnership schools, candidates will be assigned placements at the level and in the subject area of their intended certification.

The clinical experience placement dates are determined in advance by the *Director of Clinical Teaching* or the *Director of FasTrack* and the cooperating districts. Whenever possible, placements begin during the workdays prior to districts' first day of classes each semester and follow the districts' calendars through completion.

If a candidate chooses to defer clinical experience, he/she risks future ineligibility due to state or university changes in clinical experience eligibility or certification exam changes that occur during the deferment period. McMurry University is not liable for these eligibility or examination retake consequences.

Candidate Support

TAC§228

Each clinical teacher and intern is supported by a candidate support team, which provides ongoing guidance, feedback, and professional support throughout the duration of their field placement. This team consists of:

- A Cooperating Teacher (for clinical teachers) or a Mentor Teacher (for interns), assigned at the placement campus;
- A University Field Supervisor, assigned by the McMurry Educator Preparation Program
- Interns only: The designated campus administrator responsible for conducting the intern candidate's T-TESS (Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System)

Request to Complete Clinical Experience at a Location 100+ Miles from McMurry

All clinical experience candidates will be assigned placements within a 100-mile radius of McMurry University. This proximity ensures that university field supervisors can provide consistent, on-site support in districts where McMurry has established strong professional relationships.

In exceptional cases, candidates may request a clinical experience placement beyond a 100-mile radius by contacting the Director of Clinical Teaching to obtain the request form. This request must be submitted by the stated deadline, which is strictly enforced. (See page 4 for contact information.)

The Curriculum and Instruction faculty will review each request and notify the candidate of the final decision by the date specified on the form. Please note that approval for out-of-town placement may be withdrawn if the candidate does not meet the established TExES exam deadlines. If approved, candidates must independently arrange the proposed placement and be prepared to pay a university field supervisor's mileage fee.

Clinical Experience Requirements

TAC §228

Clinical experience requirements are guided by the Texas Administrative Code and McMurry University's Educator Preparation Program (EPP). Requirements vary slightly between candidates completing clinical teaching and those completing an internship, as outlined in the following sections.

Clinical Teacher Requirements

TAC §228

- Clinical teachers must pass all state content and pedagogy exams prior to clinical teaching. This demonstrates the content and professional knowledge needed to successfully plan and provide instruction in the respective content area.
    - Using the form obtained from the Director of Clinical Teaching, clinical teaching candidates may apply for an exception to the certification exam completion requirement by the due dates indicated on the form.
    - The McMurry Curriculum and Instruction faculty will review the request and communicate a final decision to the candidate by the date indicated on the form.
- Clinical teachers must demonstrate the professional disposition expected of an educator.
- Clinical teachers must meet the attendance requirements set by the Texas Education Agency and the McMurry Director of Clinical Teaching.
- Clinical teachers must satisfactorily complete the state required formal and informal observations
- Clinical teachers must earn a successful summative evaluation from both the cooperating teacher and university field supervisor.
- All requirements noted in The Big Country Teacher Center (BCTC) Handbook, McMurry Clinical Teaching syllabi, and Clinical Teaching Seminar syllabi.

Consequences of not Completing Clinical Teaching

- Clinical teaching is a capstone requirement of the Educator Preparation Program (EPP). As a professional entering the teaching profession, our candidates are held to the highest standards. While it is never anticipated that a candidate will be dismissed from or fail the Clinical Teaching course(s), certain circumstances may warrant this.
- McMurry University Clinical Teachers (and faculty) are expected to abide by the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics and sign a document agreeing to do so at the beginning of their journey in the EPP and again at the Clinical Teaching semester. McMurry University Clinical Teachers are also expected to abide by the McMurry Memorandum of Commitment and sign a document agreeing to do so at the beginning of their Clinical Teaching semester. Violation of these policies, whether due to incomplete attendance, unprofessional conduct, or failure to meet performance expectations, may result in removal from the placement and ineligibility for certification.
- Egregious violations may result in immediate dismissal from Clinical Teaching. Examples include, but are not limited to: any violations of the Texas Educator Code of Ethics; failing to protect student safety; felony criminal offenses; solicitation or engagement in sexual or romantic relationship with a student or minor; sexual or physical abuse of student or a minor; engaging in any type of illegal behavior with a student or minor; possession, transference, sale or distribution of a controlled substance.

- If necessary and not in response to an egregious violation, a candidate may be placed on a growth plan, targeting areas of deficiencies and support to address and remediate these deficiencies. A committee will meet comprised of members familiar with the candidate's situation and construct a plan including goals and a specific timeline. Failure to meet the goals in the growth plan will result in dismissal from Clinical Teaching. See page 10 for more information on the dismissal process.
- If a candidate is dismissed from Clinical Teaching, the candidate may elect to complete degree requirements and graduate without educator certification, provided the candidate remains in good standing with the University and has not been expelled under University policy. This may involve taking additional courses to compensate for the course hours lost. The candidate would be able to graduate with a degree but would be unable to gain their Texas educator certification through the McMurry University Educator Preparation Program.

Internship Requirements

TAC §228

- The intern candidate has been hired as the full-time employee of a school district to serve as the teacher of record in a grade level and subject area compatible with the initial certification declared with the McMurry University Educator Preparation Program (EPP).
- The McMurry FasTrack Director has examined and approved the internship placement.
- The Probationary Certificate has been issued. The requirements of a Probationary Certificate include the following:
    - Communicate with the McMurry FasTrack Director and the Certification Officer
    - Pass all state content and pedagogy exams
    - Obtain a completed Statement of Eligibility (SoE) form from the employing school district and Certification Officer
    - Complete fingerprinting and criminal background check
    - Pay and apply for a Probationary Certificate in the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS)
- An internship is successfully completed if the following are achieved:
    - Successful completion of all required observations conducted by McMurry University Field Supervisor
    - Successful summative evaluation from both the assigned campus administrator and McMurry University Field Supervisor
    - Meeting the attendance requirements set by the Texas Education Agency and the McMurry FasTrack Director
    - Demonstration of the professional disposition expected of an educator
    - Any requirements set by the FasTrack Program, McMurry University, the Texas Education Agency, or State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC)

McMurry University is responsible for internships in terms of SBEC/TEA requirements and supervision. Interns are responsible for obtaining teaching positions in TEA accredited schools. Therefore, all internships must be approved by the McMurry FasTrack Director prior to acceptance of a position in a school district. If an intern's employment is terminated by the school district, the internship and associated probationary certificate(s) will be revoked by the McMurry University Educator Preparation Program.

Interns must meet the eligibility requirements described by the Texas Administrative Code. The internship may be extended for one year if determined necessary by the school district and/or the university.

An Educator Preparation Program (EPP) or the Texas Education Agency (TEA) deactivates an intern or probationary certificate if the candidate:

- Resigns, is non-renewed, or is terminated by the school district.
- Is discharged or released from the EPP.
- Voluntarily withdraws from the EPP.
- Fails to meet pre-internship or late-hire coursework requirements within the required timeframe.
- Has an assignment that no longer meets program or state requirements.

Approved internship placements are 12-month placements and preferably begin at the start of the employing school district's semester. Interns must enroll in the associated McMurry internship courses which may only be repeated six semesters.

Section 5: Certification

McMurry University Educator Preparation Program Standard Certification Basic Requirements

TAC §230

- Officially graduate/complete bachelor's degree
- Successfully complete Clinical Experience
- Successfully complete fingerprinting and pass criminal background check per TEA guidelines
- Pass all state content and pedagogy exams
- Apply and pay for Standard Certification in Educator Certification Online System (ECOS)
- Submit a written request for standard certification by emailing the McMurry Certification Officer

Other state and federal certification requirements such as English proficiency can be found in 19 TAC §230.11.

Certification Exams

Certification candidates are eligible to begin testing upon acceptance to the McMurry EPP. To be approved to take an official TExES exam with Texas' contracted testing vendor, candidates must show test readiness by scoring 80% or higher on an approved practice test.

The practice test and official TExES approval process is as follows:

1. Students work daily on test preparation websites assigned by the McMurry EPP. McMurry Curriculum and Instruction faculty have administrative access to monitor progress. The following guidelines are essential for success:
    - Prioritize **at least** 30 minutes **daily** in the assigned preparation website. Yes, even weekends.
    - **Do not** jump around the online content. Complete every component in order. The program is designed to provide content in the most effective sequence.
    - **Do not** procrastinate! Quality of study is important. Cramming does not work.
2. When a student completes online preparation, the website will indicate that it is time to take a practice exam. ***In order for a practice exam to be valid, it must be proctored***. No exception. Some approved practice exams are provided by the following sources:

    - 240 Tutoring
    - Certify Teacher
    - Learning Liaisons
    - Passage Preparation
    - Paper practice test in McMurry Education Building
    - Pearson practice tests (must be individually approved)

Email the practice test coordinator and/or your current Curriculum and Instruction instructors to make an appointment for a proctored practice test. If a candidate does not pass an official TExES exam, note that candidates must wait 30 days before retaking an official TExES certification exam. (19 TAC §230)

In the case of Core Subjects (EC-6) TExES #391 (or any other TExES exam that contains multiple subtests), all proctored practice tests must be completed at 80% within 21 days. In other words, when a student makes 80% on the first subtest, the rest must also be satisfactorily completed within 21 days else any subtests completed outside the 21-day window must be taken at 80% again.

3. When candidates score 80% or higher on an approved, proctored, practice TExES exam, they will be guided through the process of signing up for the official TExES exam through the test vendor's website. Once 80% or higher is achieved, candidates are required to complete the official TExES exam at an approved testing location within 14 days. If the candidate fails to meet the 14-day requirement, McMurry Educator Preparation Program faculty or staff may cancel the testing appointment at the candidate's expense.

* There is a limited number of seats at the Pearson exam location in Abilene. Several days may be needed before a testing appointment is available. Occasionally, candidates drive to neighboring cities in order to test quickly.

Texas Certification Examination Retake Policy

TEC §21

As of September 1, 2015, (per Texas Education Code §21.048 in response to HB 2205, 84th Texas Legislature, 2015) candidates are limited to five attempts to pass a certification test. The five attempts include the first attempt to pass the examination and four retakes. The five attempts include any of the test approval methods (PACT, EPP, out of state, charter, and CBE). All attempts to pass a certification examination before September 1, 2015, count as one attempt. If a candidate chooses to seek permission to register for an exam for a sixth or beyond attempt, all requirements explained on the Test-Limit Waiver Information page on the TEA website will be strictly followed. Contact the McMurry University Certification Officer to navigate the waiver process.

Application for Texas Educator Certification

The McMurry Certification Officer provides clinical teachers and interns with the needed information to apply for Texas teaching certification. The process will begin toward the end of the clinical experience placement. Standard Certification approval is provided once all coursework, clinical experience, degree completion requirements, and required state-administered certification exams have been successfully completed.

Candidates seeking certification through the McMurry University Educator Preparation Program (EPP) are subject to any additional or new requirements set forth by legislative mandates, action taken by the State Board for Educator Certification, or policy changes by the Texas Education Agency.

McMurry Educator Preparation Program Complaint Procedure Policy and Guidelines

19 TAC §228

The McMurry University Educator Preparation Program is committed to maintaining a high-quality, field-based program that adheres to specific laws and rules, generally related to state and federal requirements, set forth by the Texas Education Agency. The McMurry EPP Complaint Procedure Policy and Guidelines allow an applicant, candidate, current/former employee, or school representative to submit a complaint about the McMurry EPP for investigation and resolution in a timely and effective manner.

The following guidelines explain the process an individual must follow when registering a complaint:

1. Hold a formal meeting with the McMurry University Curriculum and Instruction Department Chair to resolve the complaint. If warranted, the Department Chair will include any additional personnel in the meeting.

2. If warranted, the complainant may initiate a formal conference with the McMurry University Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Education.

3. If a resolution has not been reached, the complainant may request a formal conference with the McMurry Vice President for Academic Affairs.

4. If the complaint is not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction at the university level, the complainant may appeal the decision to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), if applicable, in accordance with TEA complaint procedures. TEA Complaints Against Educator Preparation Programs

Not all complaints fall under the authority of TEA. TEA has jurisdiction to investigate allegations of noncompliance regarding specific laws and rules, generally related to state and federal requirements. Complaints may address educator preparation program requirements listed in Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §§ 227, 228, 229, ethics (TAC 247), fingerprinting (TAC §§227, 232) and certification (TAC §§230, 231, 232, 239, 241, 242). TEA staff and the SBEC do not have jurisdiction over complaints related to contractual arrangements with an EPP, commercial issues, obtaining a higher grade or credit for training, or seeking reinstatement to an EPP.

Appendix A: TSIA 2.0 Basics

The Texas Success Initiative (TSI) is a legislatively mandated program designed to guide Texas colleges/universities to determine whether students are ready for college coursework in the areas of ELAR and mathematics.

Public colleges/universities in Texas are required to use TSI for admission. Private colleges/universities in Texas are not required to use TSI for admission to their schools, but all Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) must use it for admission to their programs. Additional information can be found at https://tea.texas.gov/student-readiness-and-high-school/college-career-and-military-prep/tsia-texas-success-initiative-assessment.

How can a student meet TSI College Readiness Standards?

- Pass TSIA2.0 (Scores may not be older than 5 years.)
  - College Readiness Classification = CRC
  - TSIA2 Math: CRC ≥ 950 or CRC < 950 and Diagnostic Level = 6
  - TSIA2 ELAR: CRC ≥ 945 and Essay ≥ 5 or CRC < 945 and Diagnostic Level ≥5 and Essay ≥5

- Earn B- or higher in specific ENGL and MATH college courses.
  - Math: Grade of B- or better in
    - MATH 1301 or higher math
  - ELAR (both reading and writing are required)
    - Writing
      - Grade of B- or better in ENGL 1310 or higher writing course
    - Reading
      - Grade of B- or better in ENGL 230_ or higher literature course
    - Writing & Reading Combined
      - Grade of B- or better in ENGL 1320 (called ENGL 1302 by state schools)

- High SAT or ACT scores (Scores may not be older than 5 years.)
  - ACT
    - Math: Composite = 23+ with Math = 19+
    - ELAR: Composite = 23+ with ELAR = 19+
  - SAT
    - Math: 530+ (no composite needed)
    - EBRW (Evidence-Based Reading & Writing): 480+ (no composite needed)

- Military service as explained in 19TAC §4.54

- Conferred associate's or bachelor's degree