

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY



Education Department

EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM
HANDBOOK

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SECTION ONE - Educator Preparation Program Overview

St. Mary's University Mission Statement

St. Mary's University, as a Catholic Marianist University, fosters the formation of people in faith and educates leaders for the common good through community, integrated liberal arts and professional education, and academic excellence.

Our mission statement is a reflection of the Characteristics of Marianist Universities. There are five elements that characterize the Marianist approach to education:

- Educate for formation in faith
- Provide an excellent education
- Educate in the family spirit
- Educate for service, justice and peace
- Educate for adaptation and change

St. Mary's University Educator Preparation Program

St. Mary's University's Educator Preparation Program aims to prepare teacher leaders who are knowledgeable of content area, as well as of pedagogy and the professional responsibilities of an educator; who are critical and reflective decision-makers; who value diversity; who have strong classroom management skills; and who are committed to educate for service, justice, peace, adaptation, and change.

In the state of Texas, educators are expected to meet high standards and be well-prepared to teach in the classrooms of this state. Educator Preparation Programs are expected to produce qualified educators who meet the needs of all learners in today's and tomorrow's Texas classrooms.

St. Mary's University's Educator Preparation Program has received the rating of **"ACCREDITED"** under the Texas Accountability System for Educator Preparation. This rating is issued by the State Board for Educator Certification under the authority of Section 21.045, Texas Education Code.

The United States Department of Education (Title II of the Higher Education Act) Educator Preparation Program Texas State Report can be obtained at <https://title2.ed.gov/Public/Home.aspx> .

Educator Preparation Program Mission Statement

St. Mary's University's Education Department incorporates state-approved standards into its curricula and provides a quality preparation program whereby aspiring teachers, specialists, and administrators can attain State of Texas certification. The Department functions as a community of faith, and faculty and students are held to high standards of scholarship, service and professionalism.

Undergraduate Candidates

At the undergraduate level, the Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education prepares students for elementary (EC-6) teaching. Secondary certification (4-8, 6-12, and 7-12) and all-level certification (EC-12) candidates major in their intended teaching field.

Upon successful completion of all program requirements, applicable TExES examinations, and state requirements, the candidate will be eligible to apply for state certification.

Graduate Candidates

At the graduate level, the Masters of Arts degree in Educational Leadership or Catholic School Leadership prepare students for school leadership positions. Certification is granted through a Post-Baccalaureate or an Alternative Certification Program (ACP).

Supply and Demand of Texas Teachers

In San Antonio and across Texas, educator supply is not keeping pace with demand, especially in high-need areas such as special education, bilingual/ESL, mathematics, and science. Recent state data show that teacher attrition rates have hovered around 12–13% annually, while the number of newly certified teachers has not fully offset these losses. In Bexar County, districts report persistent vacancies in bilingual and STEM positions, leading to increased reliance on alternatively certified teachers and out-of-field assignments. For Educator Preparation Programs in San Antonio, aligning recruitment and training with these shortage areas is critical to meeting workforce needs.

Educator Skills and Responsibilities

The Educator Preparation Program at St. Mary's University follows the Teacher Standards that are defined in the TEA Commissioner's Rules Concerning Educator Standards (TAC §149.1001). The following teacher standards addressed throughout our program:

- Standard 1: Instructional Preparation
- Standard 2: Instructional Delivery and Assessment
- Standard 3: Content Pedagogy Knowledge and Skills
- Standard 4: Learning Environment
- Standard 5: Professional Practices and Responsibilities

For a copy of TEA Commissioner's Rules Concerning Educator Standards (TAC §149.1001), go to the Appendix of this Student Handbook.

Procedural Requirements for Teacher Education Students Seeking Teacher Certification

1. Meet with Education Faculty Mentor/Advisor to go over the program corresponding to the teacher certification. Create a student folder with the Education Department.
2. Following the degree plan associated with your teacher certification area, start taking courses (start with the university core courses).
3. Upon completion of 60 hours of coursework, maintaining a GPA of 2.6, and meeting other requirements listed on the Admission Requirements to the Educator Preparation Program (p. 4 of this handbook), apply to be in the Educator Preparation Program (EPP). Refer to the St. Mary's Education Department website for the important EPP application dates: [Teacher Certification | St. Mary's University | San Antonio, Texas](#) or <https://www.stmarytx.edu/academics/teacher-certification/>.
4. Take Education courses and start logging in your pre-service field-based experience hours.
5. Apply to do either the yearlong residency or semester-long clinical teaching. The most up-to-date information about deadlines for the residency/clinical teaching application can be found in the St. Mary's

Education Department website for the important EPP application dates: [Teacher Certification | St. Mary's University | San Antonio, Texas](#) or <https://www.stmarytx.edu/academics/teacher-certification/>.

6. Successfully complete your residency or clinical teaching.

6. Take and pass the teacher certification exams:

- Elementary Education majors – Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) EC-12, Core Subjects EC-12, and the Science of Teaching Reading (STR)
- Other majors - Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) EC-12 and content area exam
- Starting Fall 2026, a teacher candidate participating in a residency shall be eligible for an enhanced standard certificate. If the candidate demonstrates proficiency in each of the educator standards for the assignment and the field supervisor, host teacher, and campus supervisor recommend to the EPP for the enhanced standard certificate, the candidate does not have to take the PPR. (19 TAC§228.65)

SECTION TWO - Admission Procedures

In order for all coursework and training to be counted towards teacher certification, a student has to apply for admission and be admitted into the Educator Preparation Program (EPP). Any education course taken before this will be for elective credit. After admission, the course (courses) will then count towards teacher certification.

Admission Requirements to the Educator Preparation Program

Per 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §227

1. Follow an approved course of study.
2. Complete at least 60 semester hours (junior standing). Adviser will verify that 60 semester hours are completed prior to semester in which first education course is taken.
3. Complete 12 – 15 hours of content coursework. Math and Science (7-12) certification will require 15 hours.
4. Achieve overall 2.6 grade point average (GPA) on all courses applied toward graduation.
5. Demonstrate college-level skills in reading, writing, and math by meeting **ONE** of the following requirements:
 - a. Scholastic Aptitude Test (**SAT**): a score of 480 on the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) and a score of 530 on the mathematics test
 - b. American College Testing (**ACT**): a combined score of 40 on the English and Reading (E + R) tests and a score of 22 on the mathematics test
 - c. Texas Success Initiative Assessment (**TSIA**): a minimum score of 950 or less than 950 AND a diagnostic level 6 on the Mathematics test and a score of 945 on the multiple-choice section with an essay score of 5-8, or less than 945 on the multiple-choice section, a diagnostic level of 5 or 6, and an essay score of 5-8.

If a student does not meet the SAT/ACT/TSIA requirement, he/she must earn a grade of “C” or better in the following courses:

- EN 1311-Rhetoric and Composition
- MT 1303-College Algebra or MT 1411-College Algebra and Trigonometry (for degree plans that require college algebra)

6. English language proficiency – meet the university language proficiency requirement

<https://www.stmarytx.edu/admission/applying/>

7. Successfully complete a departmental admissions interview.

8. If the degree plan requires taking the following courses before completing 60 semester hours, earn a grade of “B-” or better

ED 2301/3301/3302 Introduction to Teaching in American Schools The American Elementary School/
The American Secondary School

ED 3316 / 3361 Adolescent / Child Development

ED 2330 Teaching Diverse Populations

All of the requirements listed above must be met before I can apply for admission into the Educator Preparation Program. Students are advised not to take education courses until all requirements above are met. Any education course taken before requirements are met will count as elective credit until all requirements are met.

Admission Requirements for Post-Baccalaureate Students

1. **All post-baccalaureate students must:**

- a) Have earned a bachelor’s degree with a minimum GPA of 2.6 from an accredited institution
- b) Have a minimum 2.6 GPA in course work applicable to teaching field(s)

- c) Demonstrate college-level skills in reading, writing, and math by meeting one of the following requirements:
 - i. Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT): a score of 480 on the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) and a score of 530 on the mathematics test
 - ii. American College Testing (ACT): a combined score of 40 on the English and Reading (E + R) tests and a score of 22 on the mathematics test
If a student does not meet the SAT/ACT requirement, he/she must earn a grade of “C” or better in the following courses:
 - a. EN 1311-Rhetoric and Composition
 - b. MT 1303-College Algebra or MT 1411-College Algebra and Trigonometry (for degree plans that require college algebra)
 - iii. Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA): a minimum score of 950 or less than 950 AND a diagnostic level 6 on the Mathematics test and a score of 945 on the multiple-choice section with an essay score of 5-8, or less than 945 on the multiple-choice section, a diagnostic level of 5 or 6, and an essay score of 5-8.
 - d) Submit faculty recommendation(s) from teacher ed. (and from professors in teaching field(s) if accessible) verifying fitness for the teaching profession
 - e) Submit completed application form for admission into the Educator Preparation Program to the Certification Officer
 - f) Receive formal acceptance into the Program
2. **Students who earned their undergraduate degree from St. Mary’s more than five (5) years prior to the date of application will have to successfully complete a minimum of three (3) semester hours in their teaching field(s) as prescribed by the Certification Officer.**
 3. **Students who earned their undergraduate degree from an institution other than St. Mary’s will have to successfully complete a minimum of three-to-nine (3-9) semester hours in their teaching field(s) as prescribed by the Certification Officer.**

Note: All post-baccalaureate students must meet the same requirements that apply to undergraduate students before being eligible for clinical teaching.

Per TEA, the St. Mary’s University EPP may use a combination of the following for its admission requirements: Rule §4.54(6) A student who has previously attended any institution and has been determined to have met readiness standards by that institution. Rule §227.10 (b) An EPP may adopt requirements in addition to and not in conflict with those required in this section.

Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation

All applicants for Texas certificates will be screened for a record of felony or misdemeanor conviction through the Texas Department of Public Safety and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. All candidates must undergo a criminal history background check prior to clinical/student teaching. All candidates must undergo a criminal history background check prior to employment as an educator.

If you have you ever been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor and would like to check your eligibility for teaching, you can go to the TEA website: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=2147486679> . On this page you will find a Preliminary Criminal History Review for Educator Certification Candidates for a non-refundable fee of \$150.00. This service will allow those individuals who are contemplating obtaining a Texas Teacher Certificate in the future, the opportunity to have a review of an existing criminal history performed by agency staff. The review will be based solely on information provided by the candidate and will result in a non-binding opinion issued by the agency as to whether or not the candidate would be

eligible for Texas Teacher Certification at the time of the evaluation. This process does not preclude a candidate from being required to submit to a national criminal history review as required by statute at the time of application for educator credentials. Take note that even with this preliminary criminal history review, this is no guarantee that you will be able to complete field experience if rejected by individual ISDs.

Approved Certificate Areas for St. Mary's University

Art (Grades EC-12)	Mathematics (Grades 7-12)
Chemistry (Grades 7-12)	Music (Grades EC-12)
Core Subjects (Grades 4-8)	Physical Education (Grades EC-12)
Core Subjects (Grades EC-6)	Physical Science (Grades 6-12)
English Language Arts and Reading (Grades 4-8)	Principal (Grades EC-12)
English Language Arts and Reading (Grades 7-12)	Reading Specialist (Grades EC-12)
History (Grades 7-12)	Science (Grades 4-8)
Languages Other Than English - Spanish (Grades EC-12)	Social Studies (Grades 4-8)
Life Science (Grades 7-12)	Social Studies (Grades 7-12)
Mathematics (Grades 4-8)	Speech (Grades 7-12)

Transfers

The admission committee evaluates transfer applications based on all academic work attempted at the college or university level.

SECTION THREE – Educator Preparation Coursework, Training, and Field Experiences

Program Coursework and Training

St. Mary's University's Educator Preparation Program (EPP) provides a comprehensive sequence of coursework and training designed to prepare teacher candidates to meet Texas educator standards and serve effectively in diverse school settings. The program includes sustained, rigorous, and candidate-focused learning experiences that integrate coursework, field-based experiences, performance assessments, and ongoing feedback. Throughout the program, candidates engage in multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency in professional knowledge, instructional planning and delivery, classroom management, assessment, and ethical and professional responsibilities required of educators in Texas.

Prior to clinical teaching or residency, teacher candidates complete required educator preparation coursework and training that develops professional competencies aligned with state standards. Coursework emphasizes evidence-based instructional practices, student learning and development, assessment and data-driven decision making, communication skills, inclusive instruction, collaboration with families and communities, classroom management, reflective practice, and ethical conduct. Candidates are expected to demonstrate mastery of the knowledge and skills necessary to promote student achievement and create positive learning environments for all learners.

Educator Preparation Curriculum

The curriculum of the St. Mary's University Educator Preparation Program is grounded in research-based practices and aligned with requirements established by the Texas State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC). The curriculum is designed to address the Texas educator standards and provide candidates with increasingly authentic opportunities to apply instructional knowledge, receive feedback, and refine their teaching practices through coursework, training, and field experiences.

Candidates receive instruction in professional ethics and the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators, legal and professional responsibilities, classroom management, child and adolescent development, and effective instructional strategies for diverse learners. The curriculum also addresses literacy development, instruction for students with disabilities, culturally responsive and inclusive practices, digital learning and technology integration, communication and collaboration with families and communities, and the Texas educator appraisal systems. Coursework is aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), educator certification standards, and state-approved instructional materials to ensure candidates are prepared to meet the needs of all students in Texas schools.

Field-Based Experiences

Field-based experiences are a critical component of the Educator Preparation Program and provide candidates with opportunities to connect educational theory with authentic classroom practice. Prior to clinical teaching or residency, teacher candidates complete a minimum of 50 clock hours of field-based experiences in accredited public or private school settings serving diverse student populations. These experiences are carefully designed to help candidates develop instructional competencies, build professional dispositions, and gain direct experience working with students and certified teachers in classroom environments. As listed in the course catalog, the following courses provide opportunities to observe classrooms in approved public and private schools and/or begin developing teaching skills: ED 2301, ED 2330, ED 3301, ED 3302, ED 3316, ED 3361, and SS 3300.

At least 25 of the required field-based experience hours involve active engagement in instructional or educational activities under the supervision of the EPP. Candidates participate in activities such as small-group instruction, tutoring, whole-class instruction, one-on-one student support, co-teaching, supporting lead teacher instruction, and practicing classroom management skills. These experiences are conducted in authentic school settings and provide opportunities for candidates to observe effective teaching practices while progressively assuming greater instructional responsibilities. As listed in the course catalog, the following courses provide opportunities for active engagement pre-service field-based experience: ED 3340, ED 3341, ED 3350, ED 3351, ED 3362, ED 4351, ED 4630, and ED 4635.

Field-based experiences also emphasize professional reflection and continuous improvement. Each experience requires candidates to complete a written reflection that documents observations, analyzes instructional practices, and connects field experiences to professional learning. In addition, up to 25 clock hours may be completed through approved electronic transmission or video-based observations in accredited school settings. Collectively, these experiences help candidates develop the knowledge, skills, and professional judgment necessary for success during clinical teaching, residency, and future classroom practice.

Field Experience Policy

Teacher candidates in courses with fieldwork must complete their fieldwork assignments in a timely and professional manner. Missed field placement hours may be made up with special permission from the instructor and the mentor teacher. Teacher candidates are required to undergo and pass a criminal history background check to be able to conduct fieldwork for their courses and complete their clinical teaching semester.

Teacher candidates must remain in the assigned placement throughout the semester or as required by the instructor. This means that teacher candidates must complete their required hours weekly for the duration of the semester or for the duration of the placement as described by the instructor.

Teacher candidates may not choose their own field placements. All field placements are assigned by the course instructor. Teacher candidates begin fieldwork when they receive the approval from the instructor and clearance from the school district.

Attendance

1. Regular, prompt attendance is expected.
2. If you know you will be absent, email your mentor teacher and professor prior to the absence.
3. If absent, you must develop a plan to make up the hours missed and have it approved by your mentor teacher and instructor.
4. Excessive absences may result in a lower grade or withdrawal from the course.

Failure to Complete Hours as Instructed

Teacher candidates who do not complete the required field experience hours may receive a lowered grade or be withdrawn from that course.

Program Curriculum

The St. Mary's University Educator Preparation Program curriculum is structured to ensure candidates acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to become effective educators. The curriculum integrates educator standards, certification requirements, and evidence-based instructional practices while emphasizing student learning, ethical conduct, diversity, equity, and inclusion. Candidates develop expertise in lesson design, assessment, classroom management, differentiated instruction, literacy instruction, and the use of technology to enhance teaching and learning.

The curriculum also prepares candidates to meet the needs of diverse student populations by emphasizing instruction for multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and students from varied cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Through a combination of coursework, training, and field-based experiences, candidates learn to analyze student data, implement research-based instructional strategies, collaborate with families and colleagues, and engage in reflective professional practice. These experiences ensure graduates are prepared to meet Texas educator standards and positively impact student achievement in today's schools.

SECTION FOUR - Clinical Experiences

Overview of Required Clinical Experiences

The St. Mary's University Educator Preparation Program (EPP) provides candidates seeking initial classroom teacher certification with a supervised clinical experience through one of the pathways authorized by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC): Clinical Teaching, Residency, Internship, or another SBEC-approved clinical teaching option. Candidates must complete all educator preparation coursework, field-based experience requirements, and admission requirements before beginning a required clinical experience. Clinical experiences are designed to provide candidates with authentic opportunities to demonstrate proficiency in Texas educator standards while working directly with students in approved PK–12 school settings.

Candidates participating in clinical teaching, residency, or internship must experience the full range of professional responsibilities associated with the educator role, including activities connected to the beginning of the school year. These responsibilities include instructional planning, classroom management, assessment, communication with families, collaboration with school personnel, and professional responsibilities expected of Texas educators.

Approved Clinical Experience Settings

Clinical teaching and residency placements must occur in person in approved Prekindergarten–Grade 12 school settings. Approved placement sites include Texas public schools, TEPSAC-accredited private schools, Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools, and other sites approved by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Placements may not occur in virtual school settings or distance-learning laboratories. Candidates may not complete clinical experiences in a placement where they supervise their mentor teacher, cooperating teacher, host teacher, or field supervisor, nor in placements involving close family relationships prohibited by state regulations.

Clinical Teaching Requirements

Clinical teaching is a supervised, semester-long experience that serves as the culminating experience for candidates pursuing standard certification. Clinical teaching must total a minimum of **490 clock hours**, averaging no less than four hours per day in the certification area and grade level sought. Under documented circumstances such as parental leave, military leave, illness, or bereavement, the minimum may be reduced to **455 hours**.

During clinical teaching, candidates progressively assume increased responsibility for instruction through observation, co-teaching, small-group instruction, lesson delivery, assessment, classroom management, and independent teaching responsibilities. Candidates are expected to demonstrate proficiency in the Texas Educator Standards throughout the experience. Clinical teaching is considered successful when both the field supervisor and cooperating teacher recommend the candidate for certification based upon demonstrated proficiency in educator standards and successful completion of program requirements. The EPP may require additional clinical teaching hours if the initial experience is not deemed successful. The program will provide ongoing supervision and support throughout the clinical teaching assignment. For further details, see the Clinical Teaching Handbook.

Residency Requirements

Candidates may elect to complete a yearlong residency experience as an alternative to traditional clinical teaching. Residency candidates are assigned to a classroom under the guidance of a qualified host teacher and remain in the residency placement for a full school year, including the first and last instructional days of the year. Residency experiences must include a minimum of **750 clock hours**, with at least **21 hours**

per week, although the minimum may be reduced to **700 hours** in documented cases of parental leave, military leave, extended illness, or bereavement.

Residency candidates gradually assume increasing levels of instructional responsibility and must complete at least **400 hours** of instructional practice through co-teaching and leading classroom instruction. Candidates participate in structured performance assessments throughout the residency, demonstrating readiness for progressively greater instructional responsibilities. Performance assessments occur multiple times during the school year and are used to evaluate candidate growth and mastery of educator standards.

Residency candidates seeking eligibility for an Enhanced Standard Certificate must successfully complete all residency requirements and demonstrate proficiency in the state-approved teacher performance assessment dimensions identified in TAC §228.65.
For further details, see the Teacher Residency Handbook.

Professional Expectations During Clinical Experiences

Candidates participating in clinical teaching or residency are expected to:

- Follow all district, campus, and university policies and procedures.
- Maintain professional conduct consistent with the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics.
- Attend all required school functions and professional responsibilities associated with the assigned role.
- Demonstrate growth toward mastery of the Texas Educator Standards.
- Maintain regular communication with cooperating teachers, host teachers, field supervisors, and university personnel.
- Accept and implement feedback provided through observations, conferences, and performance assessments.

Successful Completion of Clinical Experiences

A clinical teaching or residency experience is considered successful when the candidate demonstrates proficiency in the applicable Texas Educator Standards and receives a recommendation for certification from the appropriate supervisors. If a recommendation is not provided, documentation describing deficiencies and needed improvements must be shared with the candidate.

Candidates who successfully complete all EPP, clinical experience, assessment, and certification requirements will be eligible for recommendation for Texas educator certification in accordance with State Board for Educator Certification requirements.

Educator Preparation Program Clinical Experience Pathways

Clinical Experience Pathway	Traditional Clinical Teaching	Yearlong Residency
Duration	1 semester	2 semesters
Minimum Hours Required	490 hours (70 days at 7 hrs/day)	Fall 260 hours (must include at least 21 hours a week) Spring 490 hours
Formal Observations	4	4 (2 in the Fall and 2 in the Spring)

Informal Observations	3	8 (4 in the Fall and 4 in the Spring)
Schedule	5 full days in the classroom	<u>Fall</u> 3 days a week in the classroom 2 days on campus <u>Spring</u> 5 full days in the classroom

SECTION FIVE - Teacher Certification

Required TExES Exams for Teacher Certification

Initial teacher certification candidates and candidates adding professional certification (Master Reading Teacher, Principal, and Reading Specialist) must take and pass the corresponding Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (TExES) exams below.

Starting Fall 2026, a teacher candidate participating in a residency shall be eligible for an enhanced standard certificate. If the candidate demonstrates proficiency in each of the educator standards for the assignment and the field supervisor, host teacher, and campus supervisor recommend to the EPP for the enhanced standard certificate, the candidate does not have to take the PPR. (19 TAC§228.65)

Certificate	Required exam(s) – TExES, unless specified
Art (Grades EC-12)	Art EC-12 PPR EC-12 (Clinical Teaching Candidates only)
Chemistry (Grades 7-12)	Chemistry 7-12 PPR EC-12 (Clinical Teaching Candidates only)
Core Subjects with STR (Grades 4-8)	The Science of Teaching Reading Core Subjects 4-8 PPR EC-12 (Clinical Teaching Candidates only)
Core Subjects with STR (Grades EC-6)	The Science of Teaching Reading Core Subjects EC-6 PPR EC-12 (Clinical Teaching Candidates only)
English Language Arts and Reading (Grades 4-8)	ELAR 4-8 PPR EC-12 (Clinical Teaching Candidates only)
English Language Arts and Reading (Grades 7-12)	ELAR 7-12 PPR EC-12 (Clinical Teaching Candidates only)
History (Grades 7-12)	History 7-12 PPR EC-12 (Clinical Teaching Candidates only)
Languages Other Than English - Spanish (Grades EC-12)	LOTE-Spanish EC-12 PPR EC-12 (Clinical Teaching Candidates only)
Life Science (Grades 7-12)	Life Science 7-12 PPR EC-12 (Clinical Teaching Candidates only)
Mathematics (Grades 4-8)	Math 4-8 PPR EC-12 (Clinical Teaching Candidates only)
Mathematics (Grades 7-12)	Math 7-12 PPR EC-12 (Clinical Teaching Candidates only)
Music (Grades EC-12)	Music EC-12 PPR EC-12 (Clinical Teaching Candidates only)
Physical Education (Grades EC-12)	PE EC-12 PPR EC-12 (Clinical Teaching Candidates only)
Physical Science (Grades 6-12)	Physical Science 6-12 PPR EC-12 (Clinical Teaching Candidates only)
Principal as Instructional Leader (Grades EC-12)	Principal as Instructional Leader ETS Performance Assessment for School Leaders
Reading Specialist (Grades EC-12)	Reading Specialist
Science (Grades 4-8)	Science 4-8 PPR EC-12 (Clinical Teaching Candidates only)

Social Studies (Grades 4-8)	Social Studies 4-8 PPR EC-12 (Clinical Teaching Candidates only)
Social Studies (Grades 7-12)	Social Studies 7-12 PPR EC-12 (Clinical Teaching Candidates only)
Speech (Grades 7-12)	Speech 7-12 PPR EC-12 (Clinical Teaching Candidates only)

Criteria to Determine Readiness to Test

Teacher candidates have to obtain approval from the St. Mary's EPP to register for any state exam. To demonstrate that they are ready to take an exam, they have to:

1. Complete an online test preparation program (Certify Teacher, 240Tutoring, or Exam Edge) and obtain a passing score of at least 75% on the program's practice test
2. Take the corresponding Representative Test and score at least 75%. Additionally, a debriefing with a faculty member is required.

When the requirements above have been met, teacher candidates will acquire a completed "Approval to Test" form from the Department Chair. The teacher candidate will submit it to the Certification Officer in order to register for the state exam.

Note: These criteria can be revised at any time in accordance with changes made by Texas Education Agency and Texas State Board of Education.

State Exam Registration

Teacher candidates will meet with the Certification Officer to acquire a Texas Education Agency Login (TEAL).

Logging onto TEAL for the First Time

1. Click on ECOS for Educators at the top of the page.
2. Click on Login to TEAL.
3. Select "Educator" as your Organization Type on the TEAL New User Registration form. TEAL will prompt you to enter your Social Security Number.
4. After you have created your TEAL user account, you will receive an email with your new user name and password. Follow the link in this email to login, using your new user name and password.
5. After changing your password and establishing your security questions, you will be redirected to the TEAL landing page, where you can access the ECOS for Educators application by clicking on the link.

Exam Approval Status

1. To check exam approval status, go to the TEA Website and login to TEAL. Click on "View Examinations".
2. "Approval to Test" will only be granted to teacher candidates that have successfully completed St. Mary's University eligibility requirements prior to submitting the Eligibility Form.

Online Registration

1. Visit the ETS Website to register for a TExES State Exam.
2. Follow the "Quick Start" directions to set-up a new account.
3. You will need your TEA ID Number each time you register for a TExES State Exam.
4. Print a copy of your admission ticket.

5. A copy of your admission ticket and a valid and acceptable identification document(s) with a name, signature and photo is required to be permitted to take a State Exam. For more details, see TExES – On The Day of The Test for more information.

Process for Taking the TExES Exams

Five Times Rule for All Exams

All teacher certification and professional certification candidates may only take the same state exam for a total of five times. The five attempts include the first attempt to pass the exam and four retakes.

Five Times Rule for Core Subjects (EC-6 & 4-8) Exams

St. Mary's University encourages its Core Subjects candidates to be fully aware of the retest policy and that they **do not use up all of their attempts by taking individual subtests (800-level tests)**. Even though the ETS system will allow candidates to sign up for the 800-level subtests after they take the whole Core Subjects test, **they should NOT do so unless they are down to only one test left to pass**. Candidates may skip through the sections of the test they have already passed by clicking next, next, next, and so on until they get to the sections that they still need to pass. Candidates do not need to answer a single question in the sections that they have already passed. Again, the only time a candidate should sign up for an individual subtest is when that is the last test the candidate needs to pass. Candidates who have inadvertently registered for individual subtests may call ETS at (800) 205-2626 to reschedule those exams into the appropriate Core Subjects exam.

TExES Retake Policy

Teacher candidates will be required to undergo additional test preparation before being approved to retake a required state exam. The Certification Officer will require a new "approval to test" before authorizing registration for the re-take of the exam.

Process for Applying for Certification

A. Applying for Your Initial Certification

Applications for all Texas Educator Certificates are made online at the [Texas Education Agency](https://www.texaseducationagency.com) website.

1. At the website, click on "Educator Login/Account Set Up" and follow the directions. You must first set up an account if you have not done so previously. You are applying for a **STANDARD** certificate, and the recommending entity is Saint Mary's University - **UNIVERSITY BASED** (not Master Teacher).
2. When you have completed the process, St. Mary's University will receive notification that you have applied for your certificate. If you are eligible, St. Mary's University will complete the recommendation and you will be notified by email that you have been recommended.

B. Eligibility for Recommendation for Certification

Clinical teachers may be recommended by the Certification Officer upon the completion of the following conditions:

- Successful completion of clinical teaching.
- Your final grades have been posted.
- You have passed all required TExES state exams.
- The required degree has been awarded.

***Alternative (Post-Baccalaureate and Graduate)**

- Successful completion of clinical teaching.
- Applied for recommendation and paid all fees.
- Passed both state exams.

Please note, however, that you will not be officially certified until TEA has:

1. received and paid the required fee
2. received your fingerprint card (if applicable) and
3. completed and passed a criminal history background check.

EPP Policy on Return Finishers

If a Finisher (teacher candidate who completes the EPP program but does not pass the required teacher certification exams) returns for test approval, the EPP may make test approval contingent on the candidate completing additional coursework and/or training. EPPs can require this if:

- The candidate is seeking test approval in an area where the **standards and/or test changed** since the candidate completed the EPP; or
- If the candidate has returned to the EPP for test approval **five or more years** following the academic year of completion.

Reciprocity Policy

The courses offered by the Education Department are designed to lead to teacher certification in Texas. These courses may partially fulfill the certification requirements in other states.

SECTION SIX – Program Benchmark Guidelines and Competency and Aptitude Assessment to Teach (CAAT) Policy

St. Mary's University Educator Preparation Program Benchmark Guidelines

All students who have declared their intent to pursue a major with teacher certification are provided information and support starting with the first week of their studies at St. Mary's University. Likewise, there are some established expectations of the students as outlined in the table below:

	✓	YEAR 1		✓	YEAR 2
FALL		Complete 15/18 credit hours			Complete 15/18 credit hours
		Earn minimum 2.6 GPA			Maintain minimum 2.6 GPA
		Complete required courses: EN 1311 & MT 1303 or MT 1411			Receive advising from ED Dept. academic advisor
		Receive advising from ED Dept. academic advisor			Review academic progress and receive support as needed
		Review academic progress and receive support as needed			
SPRING		Complete 15/18 credit hours			Complete 15/18 credit hours
		Maintain minimum 2.6 GPA			Maintain minimum 2.6 GPA
		Receive advising from ED Dept. academic advisor			Receive advising from ED Dept. academic advisor
		Review academic progress and receive support as needed			Review academic progress and receive support as needed
	✓	YEAR 3		✓	YEAR 4
FALL		Complete 15/18 credit hours			Complete 15/18 credit hours
		Have completed at least 60 credit hours			If doing Residency, complete at least 260 hrs of residency
		Apply for Admission to EPP			Demonstrate satisfactory performance on 2 performance gates
		Receive advising from ED Dept. academic advisor			Retake/pass TExES PPR EC-12 practice, representative test, and exam, if needed
		Complete minimum 12 hours field experience			Receive advising from ED Dept. academic advisor
		Review academic progress and receive support as needed			Take/pass TExES content practice test
					Debrief on TExES content representative test
					Take/pass TExES content exam
					Review academic progress and receive support as needed

SPRING		Complete 15/18 credit hours			Complete at least 490 hours of clinical teaching experience
		Complete minimum 12 hours field-based experience			If doing Residency, demonstrate satisfactory performance on 2 performance gates
		Receive advising from ED Dept. academic advisor			If doing Clinical Teaching, demonstrate satisfactory performance on 4 Formal Observations

	Review academic progress and receive support as needed		Retake/pass TExES PPR EC-12 or content practice, representative test, and exam, if needed
	Apply for Admission to Residency or Clinical Teaching		Review academic progress and receive support as needed
	Take/pass TExES PPR EC-12 practice		Apply for certification
	Take/pass TExES PPR EC-12 representative test		
	Take/pass TExES PPR EC-12		

Competency and Aptitude Assessment to Teach (CAAT) Policy

The **Competency and Aptitude Assessment to Teach (CAAT) Policy** is the St. Mary's University Educator Preparation Program's system for monitoring and supporting teacher candidate development from the time a student declares a certification major through program completion. The policy serves both a **gatekeeping** and **student support** function by identifying exemplary performance, addressing concerns early, and ensuring that candidates demonstrate the professional competencies, ethical dispositions, and aptitude necessary for successful teaching.

All students pursuing teacher certification are subject to ongoing review of their academic performance, professional conduct, ethical behavior, interpersonal skills, cultural responsiveness, social-emotional competencies, physical abilities necessary for participation in educational settings, and alignment with the Marianist mission. Candidates are expected to maintain a minimum 2.6 GPA, uphold the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics, comply with university and school district policies, demonstrate professional dispositions, and exhibit behaviors that support the learning, safety, and well-being of PK–12 students.

Faculty members and school partners may submit either an **Outstanding Education Major/Teacher Candidate Recognition Form** to acknowledge exemplary performance or a **CAAT Student Referral Form** to document concerns. The CAAT Committee conducts regular reviews of referrals and works with candidates to resolve concerns through support and intervention. Depending on the nature and severity of the concern, the review process may include an informal review, a Level 1 Formal Review with a written Plan of Action, or a Level 2 Formal Review. Candidates are afforded notice of concerns, opportunities to respond, access to an advisor, and appeal procedures consistent with university policy.

The CAAT process is conducted in accordance with FERPA, university privacy policies, and applicable nondiscrimination requirements, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Decisions are made without regard to disability, race, gender, or other protected characteristics.

Candidates who fail to meet established professional, ethical, academic, or performance expectations may be subject to corrective action, additional monitoring, remediation, or dismissal from the Educator Preparation Program, consistent with EPP and university policies.

This policy applies to all candidates seeking educator certification through the St. Mary's University Educator Preparation Program and remains in effect until program completion.

For complete procedures and forms, refer to the St. Mary's University Competency and Aptitude Assessment to Teach (CAAT) Policy (Appendix).

SECTION SEVEN – Policies Related to Teacher Certification

EPP Dismissal Policy

Administrative Code, Chapter 228.20(h)

St. Mary's University's Educator Preparation Program aims to prepare and certify candidates who will be effective teachers. Evidence of potential effectiveness includes academic, ethical, and professional qualities. Candidates are continuously assessed for academic and professional disposition. If a candidate's GPA falls below the required GPA or if issues arise concerning a candidate's fitness to be an educator, the candidate may be dismissed. Any candidate or staff who violates the Educators' Code of Ethics is liable for dismissal from the EPP. See Section Eight for the complete *Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators*.

Reasons candidates may be dismissed from the Educator Preparation Program include, but are not limited to the following:

- Cumulative GPA falls below 2.6
- *Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators* violation
- Criminal Background Check that precludes placement
- Failure to make continual progress towards completion
- Failure to become certified within five years of graduation/finishing
- After finishing the program, a significant change in the standards or test requirements for the certification field in which the student prepared

Policy Regarding Prior Coursework for Educator Certification - Military

In accordance with 19 TAC §228.35(a)(5)(A), military service members or military veterans may be given credit for certain verified military service, training, or education toward the training, education, work experience or related requirements (other than certification examinations) for educator certification requirements, provided that the military service, train, or education is directly related to the certificate being sought.

Any student or prospective student who wishes to obtain credit for military service will have to contact the St. Mary's EPP Certification Officer. The student or prospective student will have to bring documentation such as the DD Form 214, DD Form 2586, or other sources identifying the military service, training or education to the Certification Officer and present the rationale for the credit request.

The Certification Officer will make an initial determination regarding credit. If the student or prospective student believes this determination is incorrect, the student may appeal the decision to the Chair of the Department of Education. If the Department Chair's decision is still unacceptable, the student may appeal to the CAHSS Dean. The CAHSS Dean's decision is final.

Once a final determination of credit has been made, the Department Chair will contact the Registrar to make this change on the student's GPS.

Policy Regarding Prior Coursework for Educator Certification - Non- Military Service

In accordance with 19 TAC §228.35(a)(5)(B), non-military students or prospective students may be given credit for verified prior coursework toward the training, education, work experience or related requirements (other than certification examinations) for educator certification requirements. Prior coursework must be directly related to the certificate being sought and must have been acquired with the last five years.

Any student or prospective student who wishes to obtain credit for prior coursework will have to contact the St. Mary's EPP Certification Officer. The student or prospective student will have to bring an Official transcript to the Certification Officer and present the rationale for the credit request.

The Certification Officer will make an initial determination regarding credit. If the student or prospective student believes this determination is incorrect, the student may appeal the decision to the Chair of the Department of Education. If the Department Chair's decision is still unacceptable, the student may appeal to the CAHSS Dean. The CAHSS Dean's decision is final.

Once a final determination of credit has been made, the Department Chair will contact the Registrar to make this change on the student's GPS

Criminal Background Check and Fieldwork Policy

Teacher candidates are required to undergo and pass a criminal history background check to be able to conduct fieldwork for their courses and complete their clinical teaching semester. St. Mary's University does not conduct these background checks. Rather, each school district is responsible for conducting these background checks and clearing St. Mary's University teacher candidates for field experience. Teacher candidates who do not have a clear criminal history may not be allowed to complete courses that require fieldwork. This may impact a teacher candidate's ability to complete the program. Depending on the severity of the offense discovered through the criminal background check, teacher candidates may be dismissed from the teacher preparation program. If a student experiences rejection from a school district for fieldwork due to criminal history, the department will attempt to place the student, if possible, in a different district. No more than two attempts for placement of a student will occur. For fingerprinting/background check, candidates need to show a state-issued ID, which is either a driver's license or a DPS issued state ID. In order to take the TExES exam for certification, candidates who indicate non-U.S. citizenship have to provide a passport from their country of origin. Consular, diplomatic, or embassy IDs are not sufficient.

Each applicant to and enrollee in the St. Mary's University EPP, regardless of whether the applicant or enrollee has been convicted of an offense, must be notified of the following:

- (1) the potential ineligibility of an individual who has been convicted of an offense for issuance of a certificate on completion of the EPP;
- (2) the current State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) rules prescribed in §249.16 of this title (relating to Eligibility of Persons with Criminal History for a Certificate under Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 53, and Texas Education Code, Chapter 21), as follows:
 - (a) Pursuant to the Texas Occupations Code (TOC), Chapter 53, and the Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 21, Subchapter B, the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) may suspend or revoke an existing valid certificate, deny an applicant a certificate, bar a person from being assessed or examined for a certificate, or take other disciplinary action because of a person's conviction of a felony or misdemeanor or certain other criminal history.

(b) Disciplinary action under the TOC, §53.021, does not apply to a person convicted only of an offense punishable as a Class C misdemeanor unless the person is an applicant for or the holder of a license that authorizes the person to possess a firearm and the person was convicted of the misdemeanor offense of domestic violence as defined by 18 United States Code, §921.

(c) When statute or SBEC rule codified in the Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 7, requires an offense to directly relate to the duties and responsibilities of the education profession, an offense is considered to directly relate if the offense indicates a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of a student or minor, parent of a student, fellow employee, or professional colleague; interferes with the orderly, efficient, or safe operation of a school district, campus, or activity; or indicates impaired ability or misrepresentation of qualifications to perform the functions of an educator. Offenses considered to relate directly to the duties and responsibilities of the education profession include, but are not limited to:

- (1) offenses involving moral turpitude;
- (2) offenses involving any form of sexual or physical abuse or neglect of a student or minor or other illegal conduct with a student or minor;
- (3) offenses involving any felony possession or conspiracy to possess, or any misdemeanor or felony transfer, sale, distribution, or conspiracy to transfer, sell, or distribute any controlled substance defined in the Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 481;
- (4) offenses involving school property or funds;
- (5) offenses involving any attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit that would entitle any person to hold or obtain a position as an educator;
- (6) offenses occurring wholly or in part on school property or at a school-sponsored activity; or
- (7) felony offenses involving driving while intoxicated (DWI).

(d) Except as provided in subsection (f) of this section, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff, pursuant to the TOC, Chapter 53, and the requirements of this chapter, shall notify the applicant or certificate holder in writing of the TEA staff's intent to seek disciplinary action, including denial or revocation, and the reasons for the proposed action. The applicant or certificate holder shall have the opportunity to be heard according to the procedures set forth in this chapter.

(e) The grounds for revoking or suspending a certificate provided by this section and the TOC, Chapter 53, are cumulative of the other grounds and remedies provided by the TEC, §21.060, and this chapter.

(f) The TEC, §21.058, shall control actions pursued under that section.

and

(3) the right to request a criminal history evaluation letter as provided in Chapter 227, Subchapter B, of this title (relating to Preliminary Evaluation of Certification Eligibility), as follows:

(a) Within 90 calendar days of receipt of a complete request for a preliminary criminal history evaluation, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff will notify the requestor, by email to the email address provided on the requestor's application, of the TEA's determination with regard to the requestor's potential ineligibility based on the matters described in the request for preliminary criminal history evaluation.

(b) The preliminary criminal history evaluation letter will be strictly limited to the facts stated and the documents submitted by the requestor, as of the date of the request. Any documents or information not provided by the requestor will not be considered reasonably available for purposes of evaluating the request. In the event that the requestor subsequently applies for certification by the State Board for Educator Certification, complete fingerprint-based national criminal history information will be required. The TEA staff may conduct a criminal history investigation at that time regarding the offense(s) that were the subject of the request, based on any misstatements, incomplete information, or missing documentation in the request for preliminary criminal history evaluation; additional or subsequent criminal history or inappropriate conduct; or changed circumstances.

(c) The preliminary criminal history evaluation letter relates only to whether the specific information submitted constitutes grounds for ineligibility. The evaluation letter is not a guarantee of educator certification, admission to an educator preparation program, or employment as an educator.

St. Mary's University Student Grievance Policy

Purpose

St. Mary's University is committed to a policy of treating all members of the University Community fairly in regard to their personal and professional concerns.

The primary objective of a student grievance procedure is to insure that concerns are promptly dealt with and resolutions reached in a fair and just manner. It is essential that each student be given adequate opportunity to bring complaints and problems to the attention of university administration with the assurance that each will be given fair treatment. As such, any student at St. Mary's University may file a grievance through this student grievance procedure.

Definitions

A grievance is defined as dissatisfaction occurring when a student believes that any decision, act, or condition affecting him or her is illegal, unjust, or creates unnecessary hardship. Such grievances may concern, but are not limited to, the following academic problems; mistreatment by any university employee, wrongful assessment of fees; records and registration errors; and student employment.

Complaints covered by policies already in place (i.e. discrimination, sexual harassment, grade issues, financial aid, etc.) are excluded from this policy.

The term "student" includes all persons taking courses at St. Mary's University, both full—time and part-time, pursuing undergraduate, graduate, law or professional studies and those who attend post-secondary institutions other than St. Mary's University and/or who reside in St. Mary's University resident halls. Persons who are not officially enrolled for a particular term but who have a continuing relationship with St. Mary's University are considered students.

Grievance Procedure

Prior to invoking the procedures described below, the student is strongly encouraged to discuss his or her grievance with the person(s) alleged to have caused the grievance. The Discussion should be held as soon as the student first becomes aware of the act or condition that is the basis of the grievance. Additionally, or in the alternative, the student may wish to present his or her grievance in writing to the person(s) alleged to have caused the grievance. In either case, the person alleged to have caused the grievance must respond to the student either orally or in writing. However, any St. Mary's University student who believes that he/she has not been treated fairly may make use of the student grievance procedure within ten (10) working days of the incident. Student grievances which are filed after more than ten (10) working days from the initial incident will not be accepted and are deemed to be waived.

A. Level One: Initial Review

If a student decides not to present his or her grievance to the person(s) alleged to have caused the grievance, or if the student is not satisfied with the response, he or she may present the grievance in writing to the next level supervisor within ten (10) working days of the incident.

The grievant must file a written request for a hearing along with a complete written statement of the alleged grievance. The statement should include the name of the University official to whom the grievance is directed, and the remedy sought. If a student needs assistance regarding the

initiation or presentation of a grievance, they may contact the following St. Mary's University officers for assistance:

Elsa Ybanez, Human Resources Office, StLH x3725

Dr. Tim Bessler, Dean of Students, UC x3714

The next level supervisor will conduct an informal investigation as warranted to resolve any factual disputes. The supervisor may appoint a fact-finding panel of no more than three persons from the University community to conduct a formal investigation. The supervisor must state the terms and conditions of the investigation in a memorandum appointing the fact-finding panel. A fact-finding panel appointed hereunder shall have no authority to make recommendations or impose final action. The panel shall be limited to determining and presenting facts to the supervisor.

The supervisor's disposition of the grievance shall be based on a hearing. The supervisor will act as the chair of the grievance hearing, unless the grievant objects on the basis that the supervisor is not an impartial decision-maker. In such case, the Vice President for the respective division will appoint another chair for the hearing.

The following procedures will be observed in the hearing:

- i. The hearing will be conducted in private. Indications of irresponsible discussion of the grievance outside of the formal hearing may become the basis for allegations that due process has been violated. All parties to the hearing are cautioned against irresponsible discussion. The parties will make no public statements about the case during the course of the hearing.
- ii. During the proceedings, all parties will be permitted to have an advisor present. All parties to the grievance will have the right to obtain witnesses and present evidence. The University will cooperate with all parties in securing witnesses and making available documentary and other evidence to the extent permitted by law.
- iii. All parties have the right to question witnesses, **however, the accused and the accuser may not question each other.** When a witness has made a written statement and cannot or will not appear, but the chair determines that the interests of justice require admission of that statement, the Chair will identify the witness, disclose the statement, and if possible provide for interrogatories. The Chair will also grant appropriate continuances to enable either party to investigate evidence, or for any other appropriate reason.
- iv. In all cases, the burden of proof shall be on the grievant. However, the Chair will not be bound by strict rules of legal evidence. The decision will take the form of findings of fact, conclusions, and recommended disposition of the grievance. The findings of fact, conclusions and recommended disposition must be based solely on the hearings' record, pertinent University procedures set forth in this statement, and the laws of the State of Texas and the United States of America.

The supervisor's disposition of the grievance shall be reported to the student in writing and shall inform the student of the right to seek review by the appropriate Vice President upon written appeal by the student. The supervisor's response should be transmitted to the student within ten (10) working days from the date the written grievance was received by the supervisor. If the disposition extends beyond the ten (10) working days the supervisor should inform the student of the delay and the expected response date.

Regardless of the disposition of the grievance, no member of the University community may harass or retaliate against a student who has filed a grievance under the University grievance procedure. Such actions of harassment or retaliation are explicitly proscribed by the University.

B. Level Two: Grievance Appeal Procedure

The Vice President's action will be limited to a review of the basis for the supervisor's disposition and will not involve a de novo factual investigation. Notwithstanding the above, the Vice President may, but is not required to, direct that further facts be gathered or that additional remedial action be taken. The Vice President's decision should be transmitted to the student within ten (10) working days the Vice President should inform the student of the delay and the expected response date.

In the event that a grievance is filed against a Vice President, the supervisor is the President of the University, and the appeal review will be conducted by the Chancellor, whose decision shall constitute final agency action. In the event that a grievance is filed against the President, the supervisor is the Chancellor, whose decision shall constitute final agency action.

After the candidate has exhausted all attempts at the program level to resolve a complaint that occurred within the past two years and has not received the relief sought, information on how to file a complaint with TEA can be secured from the EPP by information posted at their physical facility, on their website or, upon request, in writing.

The official TEA complaint process can be found at www.tea.texas.gov in the banner located at the bottom of the page and then select "Educator Preparation Programs".

SECTION EIGHT - Appendix

Appendix A - Texas Beginning Teacher Standards

Chapter 149. Commissioner's Rules Concerning Educator Standards Subchapter AA. Teacher Standards

[ch149aa.pdf](#) or <https://tea.texas.gov/laws-and-rules/commissioner-rules-tac/coe-tac-currently-effect/ch149aa.pdf>

(1) Standard 1--Instructional Preparation. Teachers understand how students learn, and they prepare for instructional delivery by designing lessons, evaluating instructional materials, leveraging their knowledge of students, and engaging in a thorough process for lesson internalization.

(A) Teachers apply basic principles of lesson plan design from the learning sciences to prepare for instruction.

(i) Teachers understand learning as an active and social process of meaning-making that results in changes in student knowledge and behavior based on connections between past and new experiences.

(ii) Teachers prepare instruction that uses research and evidence-based teaching strategies for eliciting and sustaining attention and motivation and supporting encoding, such as use of multimedia learning principles, reduction of extraneous cognitive load, use of worked examples, interleaving, and deep integration of new experiences with prior knowledge.

(iii) Teachers prepare instruction that uses research and evidence-based strategies for memory and recall such as interleaving, spacing, retrieval practice, and metacognition.

(iv) Teachers recognize misconceptions about learning, the brain, and child and adolescent development, including myths such as learning styles, personality traits, and hemispheric dominance, and avoid unsupported instructional practices based on these misunderstandings.

(B) Teachers evaluate instructional materials and select or customize the highest quality district-approved option to prepare for instruction.

(i) Teachers identify the components of high-quality instructional materials, such as a logical scope and sequence, clear learning objectives, grade- or course-level content, explicit instruction, student engagement, academic language, deliberate practice, and assessment, appropriate to the discipline.

(ii) Teachers identify the benefits of using high-quality instructional materials.

(iii) Teachers apply knowledge of the components of high-quality instructional materials to select or customize materials when appropriate.

(iv) Teachers analyze instructional materials and digital resources to ensure quality, rigor, and access to grade- or course-level content.

(v) Teachers use high-quality materials to plan instruction that connects students' prior understanding and real-world experiences to new content and contexts.

(C) Teachers understand initial lesson plan design and, when district-approved materials are not available and when directed by their district, engage in initial lesson plan design using science of learning concepts.

(i) Teachers design lessons based on the components of high-quality instructional materials, such as a logical scope and sequence, clear learning objectives, application of explicit instruction, and grade- or course-level content.

- (ii) Teachers design lessons that effectively connect learning objectives with explicit instruction, student engagement, academic language, deliberate practice, and assessment.
- (iii) Teachers design lessons that connect students' prior understanding and real-world experiences to new content and contexts.
- (iv) Teachers plan for the use of digital tools and resources to engage students in active deep learning.
- (D) Teachers ensure lesson sequence and materials meet the needs of all learners and adapt methods when appropriate.
 - (i) Teachers plan for the use of multiple means to engage students, varied ways of representing information, and options for students to demonstrate their learning.
 - (ii) Teachers leverage student data to prepare flexible student groups that facilitate learning for all students.
 - (iii) Teachers differentiate instruction and align methods and techniques to diverse student needs, including acceleration, just-in-time supports, technology, intervention, linguistic supports, appropriate scaffolding, and implementation of individualized education programs.
- (E) Teachers recognize students' backgrounds (familial, educational, linguistic, and developmental) as assets and apply knowledge of students to engage them in meaningful learning.
 - (i) Teachers plan to present information in a meaningful way that activates or provides any prerequisite knowledge to maximize student learning.
 - (ii) Teachers collaborate with other professionals, use resources, and plan research- and evidence-based instructional strategies to anticipate and respond to the unique needs of students, including disabilities, giftedness, bilingualism, and biliteracy.
 - (iii) Teachers plan instructional practices and strategies that support language acquisition so that language is comprehensible and instruction is fully accessible.
 - (iv) Teachers apply knowledge of how each category of disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (20 U.S.C. §1400, et seq.) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. §794) can affect student learning and development.
- (F) Teachers engage in a thorough process of lesson internalization to prepare well-organized, sequential instruction that builds on students' prior knowledge.
 - (i) Teachers identify how the intentional sequencing of units, lessons, and learning tasks supports student knowledge and mastery throughout the year.
 - (ii) Teachers identify how the learning goals of units and lessons are aligned to state standards.
 - (iii) Teachers use assessment data to identify prior knowledge and plan for the learning needs of students.
 - (iv) Teachers internalize lesson content by reading the texts, completing learning tasks and assessments, rehearsing lesson delivery, and identifying any personal gaps in understanding.
 - (v) Teachers plan for pacing, use of teacher resources, and transitions between activities.
 - (vi) Teachers create or analyze and customize exemplar responses and anticipate potential barriers to learning.
 - (vii) Teachers strategically plan instructional strategies, formative assessments, technology, scaffolds, and enrichment to make learning accessible to all students.

(2) Standard 2--Instructional Delivery and Assessment. Teachers intentionally apply their knowledge of students and the learning process to implement high-quality instruction and assessment practices that are research- and evidence-based and informed by student work.

- (A) Teachers deliver research- and evidence-based instruction to meet the needs of all learners and adapt methods when appropriate.

- (i) Teachers effectively communicate grade- or course-level expectations, objectives, and goals to help all students reach high levels of achievement.
 - (ii) Teachers apply research- and evidence-based teaching strategies for eliciting and sustaining attention and motivation and supporting memory encoding and recall, such as interleaving, spacing, metacognition, and distributed practice.
 - (iii) Teachers ensure a high degree of student engagement through explicit instruction, student discussion, feedback, and opportunities for deliberate practice.
 - (iv) Teachers apply research- and evidence-based teaching strategies that connect students' prior understanding and real-world experiences to new content and contexts and invite student perspectives.
 - (v) Teachers implement appropriate scaffolds in response to student needs.
 - (vi) Teachers strategically implement tools, technology, and procedures that lead to increased participation from all students, elicit patterns of student thinking, and highlight varied responses.
 - (vii) Teachers provide multiple means of engagement to encourage all students to remain persistent in the face of challenges.
 - (viii) Teachers collaborate with other educational professionals, when appropriate, to deliver instruction that addresses students' academic and non-academic needs.
- (B) Teachers scaffold instruction, from initial knowledge and skill development through automaticity, toward complex, higher-order thinking, providing opportunities for deeper learning.
- (i) Teachers set high expectations and facilitate rigorous grade- or course-level learning experiences for all students that encourage them to apply disciplinary and cross-disciplinary knowledge to real-world problems.
 - (ii) Teachers apply instructional strategies to deliberately engage all students in critical thinking and problem solving.
 - (iii) Teachers validate student responses utilizing them to advance learning for all students.
 - (iv) Teachers respond to student errors and misconceptions with prompts or questions that build new understanding on prior knowledge.
 - (v) Teachers use strategic questioning to build and deepen student understanding.
 - (vi) Teachers strategically incorporate technology that removes barriers and allows students to interact with the curriculum in more authentic, significant, and effective ways.
- (C) Teachers consistently check for understanding, give feedback, and make lesson adjustments as necessary.
- (i) Teachers use a variety of formative assessments during instruction to gauge and respond to student progress and address misconceptions.
 - (ii) Teachers implement frequent or low- or no-stakes assessments to promote retrieval of learned information.
 - (iii) Teachers continually monitor and assess students' progress to guide instructional outcomes and determine next steps to ensure student mastery of grade- or course-level content.
 - (iv) Teachers build student capacity to self-monitor their progress.
 - (v) Teachers provide frequent, timely, and specific explanatory feedback that emphasizes effort, improvement, and acknowledges students' strengths and areas for growth.
 - (vi) Teachers strategically implement instructional strategies, formative assessments, scaffolds, and enrichment to make learning accessible to all students.
 - (vii) Teachers set goals for each student in response to previous outcomes from formative and summative assessments.

(viii) Teachers involve all students in self-assessment, goal setting, and monitoring progress.

(D) Teachers implement formative and summative methods of measuring and monitoring student progress through the regular collection, review, and analysis of data.

(i) Teachers regularly review and analyze student work, individually and collaboratively, to understand students' thinking, identify strengths and progress toward mastery, and identify gaps in knowledge.

(ii) Teachers combine results from different measures to develop a holistic picture of students' strengths and learning needs.

(iii) Teachers apply multiple means of assessing learning, including the use of digital tools, to accommodate according to students' learning needs, linguistic differences, and/or varying levels of background knowledge.

(iv) Teachers use assessment results to inform and adjust instruction and intervention.

(v) Teachers clearly communicate the results of assessments with students, including setting goals, identifying areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

(3) Standard--Content Pedagogy Knowledge and Skills. Teachers show a full understanding of their content and related pedagogy and the appropriate grade-level TEKS.

(A) Teachers understand the major concepts, key themes, multiple perspectives, assumptions, processes of inquiry, structure, and real-world applications of their grade-level and subject-area content.

(i) Teachers demonstrate a thorough understanding of and competence in the use of open education resource instructional materials when available for the grade level and subject area.

(ii) Teachers have expertise in how their content vertically and horizontally aligns with the grade-level/subject-area continuum, leading to an integrated curriculum across grade levels and content areas.

(iii) Teachers identify gaps in students' knowledge of subject matter and communicate with their leaders and colleagues to ensure that these gaps are adequately addressed across grade levels and subject areas. (iv) Teachers deliberately and regularly share multiple different examples of student representations and resolutions.

(v) Teachers stay current with developments, new content, new approaches, and changing methods of instructional delivery within their discipline.

(B) Teachers demonstrate content-specific pedagogy that meets the needs of diverse learners, utilizing engaging instructional materials to connect prior content knowledge to new learning.

(i) Teachers teach both the key content knowledge and the key skills of the discipline and requisite linguistic skills making the information accessible to all learners by constructing it into usable knowledge. (ii) Teachers make appropriate and authentic connections across disciplines, subjects, and students' real-world experiences to build knowledge from year to year.

(iii) Teachers provide multiple means of representation and engagement to promote literacy and ensure discipline-specific academic language is accessible for all students.

(iv) Teachers explicitly teach, encourage, and reinforce the use of academic language, including vocabulary, use of symbols, and labeling.

(v) Teachers prepare for and apply scaffolds in the lesson to make content accessible to all students, including diverse learners such as emergent bilingual students, students with disabilities, and students working above and below grade level.

(vi) Teachers engage students in productive struggle by allowing them time to work, asking questions to deepen their thinking, encouraging multiple approaches, praising

effort on successful and unsuccessful attempts, and contrasting student attempts and correct solutions.

(C) Teachers demonstrate research- and evidence-based best practices specific to planning, instruction, and assessment of mathematics.

(i) Teachers communicate, using multiple means of representation, the relationship between mathematical concepts and mathematical procedures.

(ii) Teachers engage students in recursive lesson activities that reinforce automaticity in prerequisite knowledge and skills to mitigate the use of working memory when engaging those knowledge and skills as task complexity increases.

(iii) Teachers use multiple means of representation to engage students in mathematical tasks that deepen students' understanding of conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and mathematical reasoning. (iv) Teachers prepare and deliver instruction and questioning to deliberately solicit different explanations, representations, solutions, and reasoning from all students.

(v) Teachers prepare and deliver explicit instruction and modeling that links grade-level conceptual understanding with mathematical procedures and avoids shortcuts to problem solving.

(vi) Teachers analyze instructional plans to ensure an appropriate balance between conceptual understanding and procedural fluency.

(vii) Teachers facilitate discourse through regular opportunities for students to communicate the relationship between mathematical concepts and mathematical procedures.

(viii) Teachers provide time for students to collaboratively and independently apply conceptual understanding and procedural fluency to problem-solving.

(ix) Teachers communicate and model the connections between mathematics and other fields that use mathematics to problem solve, make decisions, and incorporate real-world applications in instruction.

(x) Teachers explicitly teach and model that math abilities are expandable and improvable.

(D) Teachers demonstrate research- and evidence-based best practices specific to planning, instruction, and assessment of language arts and reading.

(i) Teachers analyze instructional materials in preparation for instruction to ensure they provide grade-level appropriate, systematic, and explicit practice in foundational literacy skills.

(ii) Teachers analyze instructional materials in preparation for instruction to ensure that foundational literacy skills are reached at each grade or course level.

(iii) Teachers implement clear and explicit reading instruction aligned to the Science of Teaching Reading competencies and engage students in deliberate practice to make meaning from text.

(iv) Teachers identify and analyze grade- or course-level and complex texts for quality in preparation for instruction.

(v) Teachers prepare and deliver explicit reading instruction that uses grade-level and complex texts to build student knowledge.

(vi) Teachers strategically plan and implement supports such as read-aloud and questioning at varied levels of complexity to support comprehension of high-quality complex texts.

(vii) Teachers engage students in writing practice, including text-based writing that builds comprehension and higher-order thinking skills. (viii) Teachers engage students in

speaking practice that builds comprehension, language acquisition, and higher-order thinking skills.

(ix) Teachers use high-quality assessments to monitor grade-level appropriate foundational skills development.

(x) Teachers implement and analyze a variety of high-quality literacy assessments to monitor grade-level appropriate comprehension and identify gaps.

(xi) Teachers apply just-in-time supports and intervention on prerequisite skills and continually monitor to determine the need for additional learning support.

(4) Standard 4--Learning Environment. Teachers maintain a safe and supportive learning environment that is characterized by respectful interactions with students, consistent routines, high expectations, and the development of students' self-regulation skills.

(A) Teachers establish, implement, and communicate consistent routines for effective classroom management, including clear expectations for student behavior and positive interventions, that maintain a productive learning environment for all students.

(i) Teachers arrange their classrooms and virtual learning spaces in an organized way that is safe, flexible, and accessible to maximize learning that accommodates all students' learning and physical needs.

(ii) Teachers implement consistent classroom and behavior management systems to maintain an environment where all students are engaged and can reach academic and nonacademic goals.

(iii) Teachers model and provide explicit instruction on effective behavior regulation skills to build students' resilience and self-discipline.

(iv) Teachers maintain a safe and positive culture of student ownership and group accountability that fosters engagement by all students in the classroom expectations, culture, and norms.

(B) Teachers lead and maintain classroom environments in which students are motivated and cognitively engaged in learning.

(i) Teachers maintain a classroom environment that is based on high expectations and student self-efficacy.

(ii) Teachers strategically use instructional time, including transitions, to maximize learning.

(iii) Teachers manage and facilitate strategic and flexible groupings to maximize student learning.

(5) Standard 5--Professional Practices and Responsibilities. Teachers are self-aware and consistently hold themselves to a high standard for individual development. They collaborate with other educational professionals; communicate regularly with stakeholders; maintain professional relationships; comply with federal, state, and local laws; and conduct themselves ethically and with integrity.

(A) Teachers model ethical and respectful behavior and demonstrate integrity in all settings and situations.

(i) Teachers understand and comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws pertaining to the professional behaviors and responsibilities of educators.

(ii) Teachers adhere to the Educators' Code of Ethics in §247.2 of this title (relating to Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators), including following policies and procedures at their specific school placement(s).

(iii) Teachers demonstrate understanding of their role in strengthening American democracy and are willing to support and defend the constitutions of the United States and Texas.

(iv) Teachers advocate for and apply knowledge of students' progress and learning plans through the maintenance of thorough and accurate records.

- (v) Teachers model and promote for students the use of safe, ethical, and legal practices with digital tools and technology.
- (B) Teachers actively self-reflect on their practice and collaborate with other educational professionals to deepen knowledge, demonstrate leadership, and improve their instructional effectiveness.
 - (i) Teachers apply consistent reflective practices, analysis of student work, and video evidence of teaching to identify and communicate professional learning needs.
 - (ii) Teachers seek and apply job-embedded feedback from colleagues, including supervisors, mentors, coaches, and peers.
 - (iii) Teachers establish and strive to achieve professional goals to strengthen their instructional effectiveness and better meet students' needs.
 - (iv) Teachers engage in relevant professional learning opportunities that align with their growth goals and student learning needs.
 - (v) Teachers seek to lead other adults on campus through professional learning communities, grade- or subject-level team leadership, committee membership, or other opportunities.
 - (vi) Teachers collaborate with educational professionals to ensure learning is accessible and enables all students to reach their academic and non-academic goals.
- (C) Teachers communicate consistently, clearly, and respectfully with all community stakeholders, including students, parents and families, colleagues, administrators, and staff.
 - (i) Teachers clearly communicate the mission, vision, and goals of the school to students, colleagues, parents and families, and other community members.
 - (ii) Teachers communicate regularly, clearly, and appropriately with families about student progress, providing detailed and constructive feedback in a language that is accessible to families to support students' developmental and learning goals.
 - (iii) Teachers build mutual understanding of expectations with students, parents, and families through clear, respectful, and consistent communication methods.
 - (iv) Teachers communicate with students and families regularly about the importance of collecting data and monitoring progress of student outcomes, sharing timely and comprehensible feedback so they understand students' goals and progress.

Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §149.1001 issued under the Texas Education Code, §21.351.

Source: The provisions of this §149.1001 adopted to be effective June 30, 2014, 39 TexReg 4955; amended to effective August 17, 2025, 50 TexReg 5222.

Appendix B - Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators

Enforceable Standards.

(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 knowingly 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 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 or knowingly 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 or distribution of controlled substances and/or abuse of prescription drugs and toxic inhalants.

(M) Standard 1.13. The educator shall not consume alcoholic beverages on school property or during school activities when students are present.

(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.

(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.

(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 assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:

- (i) the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;
- (ii) the subject matter of the communication;
- (iii) whether the communication was made openly or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;
- (iv) whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;
- (v) whether the communication was sexually explicit; and
- (vi) whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student.

Source Note: The provisions of this §247.2 adopted to be effective March 1, 1998, 23 TexReg 1022; amended to be effective August 22, 2002, 27 TexReg 7530; amended to be effective December 26, 2010, 35 TexReg 11242

Appendix C – Competency and Aptitude Assessment to Teach (CAAT) Policy



Education Department

Competency and Aptitude Assessment to Teach (CAAT) Policy

I. Preamble

St. Mary's University Mission Statement

St. Mary's University, as a Catholic Marianist University, fosters the formation of people in faith and educates leaders for the common good through community, integrated liberal arts and professional education, and academic excellence.

St. Mary's University's Educator Preparation Program (EPP) aims to prepare teacher leaders who are knowledgeable of the content area, as well as of pedagogy and the professional responsibilities of an educator; who are critical and reflective decision-makers; who value diversity; who have strong classroom management skills; and who are committed to educating for service, justice, peace, adaptation, and change.

The State Board of Educator Certification has approved the St. Mary's Education Department to be an Educator Preparation Program (EPP). EPP's are expected to produce qualified educators who meet the needs of all learners in today's and tomorrow's Texas classrooms. Additionally, EPPs are responsible for monitoring the performance of future educators and their capacity to meet the needs of the students in our public and private schools. EPPs are expected to prepare and recommend candidates for certification in one or more educator certification classes. The Education Department incorporates state-approved standards into its Marianist curricula and provides a quality preparation program whereby aspiring teachers can attain State of Texas certification.

The St. Mary's EPP has processes in place to ensure that all Education Majors/ teacher candidates can successfully complete the teacher certification program. Two vital processes are the formal application for admission to the EPP and the application to do clinical teaching. Per 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §227, this formal application for admission occurs after the completion of 60 course hours (junior year), and clinical teaching occurs during the last semester of a student's senior year. However, the program currently does not have a process to monitor student performance from the moment students declare their intent to pursue teacher certification to the formal application for admission and during clinical teaching. The Competency and Aptitude to Teach (CAAT) Policy is designed to provide a process to facilitate the gatekeeping function, as well as monitor student performance from the declaration of pursuing a teacher certification major to commencement. The EPP can then address any student concerns and recognize exemplary performance.

The CAAT policy applies to all students who have declared their intent to pursue teacher certification. The department chair and/ or the major adviser will discuss the policy during initial meetings with new students. Additionally, each Education course will include a statement on the CAAT Policy in its course syllabus and a class discussion on the policy.

The Competency and Aptitude Assessment to Teach (CAAT) Policy is based on national, state, and university standards laws, policies, and standards, as well as local policies and best practices. For a fuller understanding of the CAAT policy, review the following:

- **Texas Education Agency: Admission for Educator Preparation Programs and Preliminary Evaluation of Certification Eligibility,**
- **Texas Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Educators,**
- **Texas Education Agency: Disciplinary Policy and Mission Statement – State Board of Educator Certification, found at 19 TAC §249,**
- Texas Occupation Code, Chapter 53, Sections 53.001 through 53.105.
- **St. Mary's University Student Code of Conduct,**
- **St. Mary's Educator Preparation Program Handbook,**
- **National Association of State Directors at Teacher Education and Certification: Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE),**
- **Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) The Five Components of Social and Emotional Learning,** and
- **Local school district's policies at which the candidate engages in field observations, pre-clinical teaching, or clinical teaching.**

The CAAT process will be conducted in accordance with the ADA, and decisions will be free from bias based on disability, race, gender, or other protected characteristics.

Definitions

- Education Majors:** As defined in the St. Mary's academic catalog, “a major covers four years of work in one subject, and is sometimes referred to as the major concentration in the student's degree program.” Education majors are those students who have chosen a major that includes teacher certification.
- Teacher Candidate:** A student formally admitted to the St. Mary's University Teacher Certification Program. Applying to the St. Mary's University Teacher Certification Program usually occurs during the student's junior year and upon completing all admission requirements to the EPP (Texas Education Agency: Admission for Educator Preparation Programs and Preliminary Evaluation of Certification Eligibility). The official list of Education Majors/ teacher candidates admitted to the Teacher Certification Program is then submitted to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) Educator Certification System.
- Field-based experiences**--Introductory experiences for a classroom teacher certification candidate, incorporated with preparation coursework that involves, at the minimum, reflective observation of and interaction with Early Childhood-Grade 12 students, teachers, and faculty/staff members engaging in educational activities in an authentic school setting (Source: Texas Academic Code Chapter 228, Definitions)
- Clinical Teaching:** A supervised teacher assignment through an EPP in the classroom of a cooperating teacher at a public school accredited by the TEA or other school approved by the TEA for this purpose that may lead to the completion of a standard certificate, also referred to as student teaching. (Source: Texas Academic Code Chapter 228, Definitions)

II. Professional Competency and Aptitude Expectations

Each St. Mary's University teacher candidate is expected to demonstrate the following professional competencies and aptitudes throughout their enrollment and their degree plan.

A. Alignment with the St. Mary's University/Marianist Mission

Demonstrates behaviors that align with the St. Mary's University/Marianist Mission.

B. Academic Competencies and Aptitudes

1. Meets all course requirements and maintain a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.6 (for all courses and for major courses) to be eligible to formally apply to the EPP and to do clinical teaching (Texas Education Agency: Admission for Educator Preparation Programs and Preliminary Evaluation of Certification Eligibility). Note that under the CAAT Policy, each student's GPA is going to be reviewed every semester, and notice will be given to those whose GPA falls under 2.6
2. Attends all classes, including laboratories, practica, and events associated with the course or program. (St. Mary's Attendance Policy)
3. Demonstrates truth, honesty, and personal integrity in doing course work, including proper citation of source materials and truthfully completing the applications for admission into the EPP and clinical teaching. Refer to the (St. Mary's University Academic Honesty Policy) and the St. Mary's Code of Conduct.

C. Ethical Competencies and Aptitudes

1. Acts in the best interest of all students (MCEE II.C)
2. Safeguards-confidential information concerning K-12 students or colleagues unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.-(TX-Code of Ethics 2.1 and 3.1)
3. Demonstrates ethical competence and aptitude for successful teaching through skills such as:
 - a. the ability to act in the best interest of all students (MCEE II.C)
 - b. the capabilities to promote the health, safety, and wellbeing of students while under the teacher candidate's supervision. (MCEE III)
4. Does not subject a colleague to sexual harassment (TX Code of Ethics 2.8)
5. Does not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in physical mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of a student (TX Code of Ethics 3.5)
6. Uses technology, like electronic communication and social media) in a responsible manner (MCEE V)
7. Is of good moral character and worthy to instruct or supervise the youth of this state. (TX Code of Ethics 1.10)
8. Has not been charged or convicted of certain offenses that directly relate to the duties and responsibilities of the licensed occupations or other offenses less than five years before the date the person applies for the license. See Texas Occupation Code, Chapter 53, Sections 53.001 through 53.105.

D. Cultural Competencies and Aptitudes National Association of State Directors at Teacher Education and Certification: Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE)

1. Demonstrates respect for the rights and dignity of all students, peers, families, superiors, and community members.
2. Demonstrates respect for students by recognizing their individual characteristics such as race, ethnicity, religion, social class, national allegiance, and cultural heritage and does not impose

- their own beliefs and values on others.
3. Does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, etc.
 4. Demonstrates positive social skills in professional and social interactions with faculty, colleagues, parents, and students.
- E. Social and Emotional Competencies and Aptitudes Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) The Five Components of Social and Emotional Learning
1. Demonstrates self-awareness, which includes the capacity to recognize one's strengths and limitations with a well-grounded sense of confidence and purpose.
 2. Demonstrates self-management, which includes the capacity to manage stress and the motivation to accomplish personal and group goals.
 3. Demonstrates social awareness, which includes the capacity to feel compassion for others, understand broader historical and social norms for behavior in different settings, and recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.
 4. Demonstrates relationship skills, which include the capacity to communicate clearly, listen actively, cooperate, work collaboratively to problem solve and negotiate conflict constructively, navigate settings with differing social and cultural demands and opportunities, provide leadership, and seek or offer help when needed.
 5. Demonstrates responsible decision-making, which includes the capacity to consider ethical standards and safety concerns and to evaluate the benefits and consequences of various actions for personal, social, and collective well-being.
- F. Physical Competencies and Aptitudes
- Exhibits motor and sensory abilities to attend and participate in class and at field-based locations, with or without accommodations, as recommended by the Office of Student Accessibility Services. Student Accessibility Services | St. Mary's University | San Antonio, Texas (stmarytx.edu)
- G. Professional Competencies and Aptitudes
- Demonstrates professional competence and aptitude for successful teaching through skills such as:
1. the ability to differentiate lessons to meet the needs of diverse students (MCEE II. A. 3)
 2. the ability to seek and use assessment data, research, and professional knowledge to inform practice (MCEE II.B. 4)
 3. the ability to reflect upon and assess one's professional knowledge and skills on an ongoing basis (MCEE II.A.5)
 4. the ability to work professionally with students, parents, teachers
- H. Each teacher candidate is subject to the policies of the local school district at which the candidate engages in field observations, preclinical teaching, or clinical teaching.

III. The CAAT Policy Process at St. Mary's University

All students will be apprised of the Competency and Aptitude Assessment to Teach (CAAT) policy once they declare their intent to pursue teacher certification (see Appendix A for an overview of the CAAT Policy process). This policy applies to all students upon enrollment in a teacher certification major or upon admission to the EPP, whichever occurs first, and remains so until the completion of their program.

Under the CAAT Policy, in addition to curriculum and testing requirements addressed in the St. Mary's University catalog and other St. Mary's University policies, all education majors and Education Majors/ teacher candidates are subject to an ongoing review by the Education Department faculty during monthly student review meetings throughout their program according to the criteria identified (or outlined) in Section II.

In August and January, faculty and partner school districts will be reminded to use the CAAT Policy Forms (see Appendices B and C) to either identify outstanding Education Majors/ teacher candidates or submit concerns regarding education majors and Education Majors/ teacher candidates by the first Thursday of every month. Completing the **Outstanding Education Major/Teacher Candidate Recognition Form** allows the EPP to identify Education Majors/ teacher candidates who display outstanding knowledge and/or skills that deserve recognition. Completing the CAAT **Student Referral Form** allows the EPP to identify those who may have some difficulties that raise concerns about the candidate's ability to complete the program successfully. All completed forms will be sent to the CAAT Committee.

The CAAT Committee is comprised of the following members:

- Department of Education Chairperson
- Department Chairperson (as applicable to the student's major)
- Director of Clinical Teaching
- One Education Faculty Member

The committee may also include one or both of the following individuals:

- One District Partnership Representative
- One St. Mary's University Education Advisory Committee Representative

A. The Outstanding Education Major/Teacher Candidate Recognition Process:

- a. This process is open to all education majors.
- b. Students may be recognized for outstanding performance in the areas of academics, field experience, clinical teaching, and other categories.
- c. To recognize the positive achievements of education majors and Education Majors/ teacher candidates, any St. Mary's University faculty member or district representative may submit an Outstanding Education Major / Teacher Candidate Recognition Form (see Appendix B) throughout the year. Areas of outstanding achievement are advising, academics, field experience, clinical teaching, and other areas related to the CAAT policy.
- d. The student will be informed of the recognition and the Recognition form will be placed in the student's file.

B. The Student Referral Process:

Successful teaching requires a combination of both academic and interpersonal skills. Although interpersonal skills do not ensure a student's teaching success, their lack will ensure failure, regardless of how academically capable the student is.

- a. Any St. Mary's University faculty member or district representative may submit a CAAT Student Referral Form (see Appendix C) throughout the year.

- b. Areas of concern are academic criteria, cultural and social attitudes and behavior, physical skills, personal and professional requirements, and emotional and mental abilities.
- c. If documented concerns for referrals are submitted, the level of review will depend on factors such as the nature, severity, and frequency of the incident or concern. For example, repeated violations may result in an immediate Formal Level 2 review. Alleged violations of the St. Mary's University Student Code of Conduct or the host school district's employee code of conduct will result in immediate Level 2 Formal Review.
- d. All students referred for review are expected to participate in the review process. Refusal to participate will not terminate the process but may result in corrective action up to and including dismissal from the EPP.

All referral reviews are internal institutional reviews in accordance with FERPA and University privacy policy and are not open to the public, including family members, friends, and other professionals. The student is permitted to have an advisor present during the review - not to represent, but to hear and help guide their participation. All members of the review committees will sign a form acknowledging the confidentiality of any student information discussed.

1. Student Referral Review

When a faculty member and/or a partner school district representative has concerns about the student meeting any of the CAAT criteria or if a problem arises in the field, the host school district's mentor/cooperating teacher or administrator may discuss concerns directly with the St. Mary's University Field Supervisor, Director of Clinical Teaching, or Department Chairperson. This concern is documented using the CAAT Referral Form (Appendix C) and then added to the Student Referral database on SharePoint by the corresponding Education Department faculty member.

Once a month, the CAAT Committee will hold an Internal Referral Review meeting to discuss new and past referrals.

For new referrals, the following items will be discussed: the details of the area of concern and the interventions that the person who brought up the concern has taken to resolve the problem. The Department Chairperson will then contact the student for a meeting occurring within 5 days of review to discuss the referral. A representative from the Dean of Students office will be copied on the email and be present at the meeting (if an in-person meeting is happening) in an advisory capacity. At the meeting, the concern will be discussed, and the student will be given up to one week to respond to the concern. The student will sign the Statement of Acknowledgement of a Referral form (Appendix D) to document the meeting.

All student responses will be evaluated at the next monthly Internal Referral Review meeting. The students concerned will also be invited to the meeting. During these meetings, the next steps will be determined: remove the concern from the database since it has been resolved, continue monitoring the student pertaining to the area of concern, or move to Formal Referral: Level I.

2. Formal Review: Level 1

If the behavior discussed in the informal review persists or when a faculty member and/or a partner school district representative is sufficiently concerned about a student's competency and aptitude for teaching, they will fill out the CAAT Student Referral Form (see Appendix C). These forms must be returned to the Chair of the Education Department.

The Formal Review Committee (FRC) will be convened. The committee will consist of:

- The St. Mary's University Department of Education Chairperson

- The St. Mary's University Director of Clinical Teaching
- Instructor and/or a partner school district representative (if applicable)
- The student
- The student's advisor of choice

The student has the right to an advisor of their choosing. An Advisor serves as a resource and support to the party through all phases of the process and may accompany their advisee to any meeting the advisee attends throughout the process. The Advisor may be a friend, mentor, family member, attorney, or any other individual a party chooses to advise, support, and/or consult with them throughout the process. Generally, the role of the Advisor is one of support, not active participation. The Advisor may consult with their advisee in a manner that does not disrupt the proceedings – by conferring or passing notes during any resolution process meeting or interview. For longer or more involved discussions, the parties and their Advisors may ask for breaks to allow for private consultation.

At least two weeks before the Formal Review: Level 1 meeting, the Department of Education Chairperson will contact the student to discuss the referral. A representative from the Office of the Dean of Students will be copied on the email. The student will be allowed to respond to the concerns raised at the meeting.

During the meeting, the Formal Review Committee (FRC), consisting of the members listed above, will develop a Plan of Action. The nature and content of the Plan of Action will depend on the specific situation. However, all Plans of Action will be stated in measurable, objective terms, including a reasonable timeline for resolving the identified concern(s), and be signed by all parties involved.

No further action is required if the student completes the Plan of Action successfully. A Plan of Action may continue for more than one semester, depending on the individual circumstances. Regardless of the length of the Plan of Action, each student on the Student Referral database will be reviewed during the monthly IRR meetings.

If the student needs to revise the Plan of Action due to circumstances beyond his/her control, the student must submit a letter to the Education Department Chairperson with this request and the reasons for doing so. The Education Department Chairperson will then convene an FRC meeting to review and decide on this request.

If the student fails to complete the Plan of Action, the Education Department Chairperson will then convene an FRC meeting where the decision to place the student on Level 2 Formal Review or to extend the Plan of Action will be made.

If the committee decides to place the student on Level 2 Formal Review, the student may appeal the committee's decision by submitting a written letter of appeal in electronic format and, if desired, provide character references to the appropriate academic dean or designee for the student's major. The appeal letter must be emailed to the appropriate academic dean within three business days of the decision made by the FRC committee. Upon receipt of the appeal, the dean will convene a committee to review the documentation. The review will be made within two weeks from the receipt of the appeal. The decision of the Dean regarding the appeal will be communicated to the student through a written letter. The decision of the Dean regarding the appeal is final.

3. Formal Review: Level 2

A Level 2 Formal Review will be conducted if the student has failed to complete a Plan of Action created during the Level 1 Review, if a second incident or concern is reported on the same student, or if the seriousness of the incident or concern warrants it. The Chair of the Education Department will contact the

student to discuss the referral. The student is given an opportunity to consult an advisor of his/her choice and to respond to any concerns, incidents, or misconduct allegations throughout these proceedings.

At the Level 2 Formal Review Meeting, in addition to the FRC Committee members listed above, the Dean of the respective college (or his /her representative) and the Dean of Students (or his/her representative) will be required to attend this meeting.

The FRC Committee will meet to:

- i. Review all relevant information regarding the incident or concern,
- ii. Interview the faculty member(s) and/or a partner school district representative who has instructed the student,
- iii. Interview the student and
- iv. Determine the student's suitability to continue in the program.

The FRC Committee may seek information from school district partners should the concern, incident, or misconduct allegation be related to the student's fieldwork or clinical teaching performance.

If the committee decides to dismiss the student from the Educator Preparation Program, the student may submit a written letter of appeal in electronic format and, if desired, provide character references to the Dean of the relevant school for consideration. The letter of appeal must be emailed to the Dean within three business days after the decision by the FRC committee. Upon receipt of the appeal, the dean will convene a committee to review the documentation. The review will be made within two weeks from the receipt of the appeal. The decision of the Dean regarding the appeal will be communicated to the student through a written letter. The Dean's decision is final.

4. Annual Reporting

Each year, the Department of Education will submit a report to the Dean's office [or Provost's office] reviewing the number of incidents, type of incidents, and summary of outcomes.

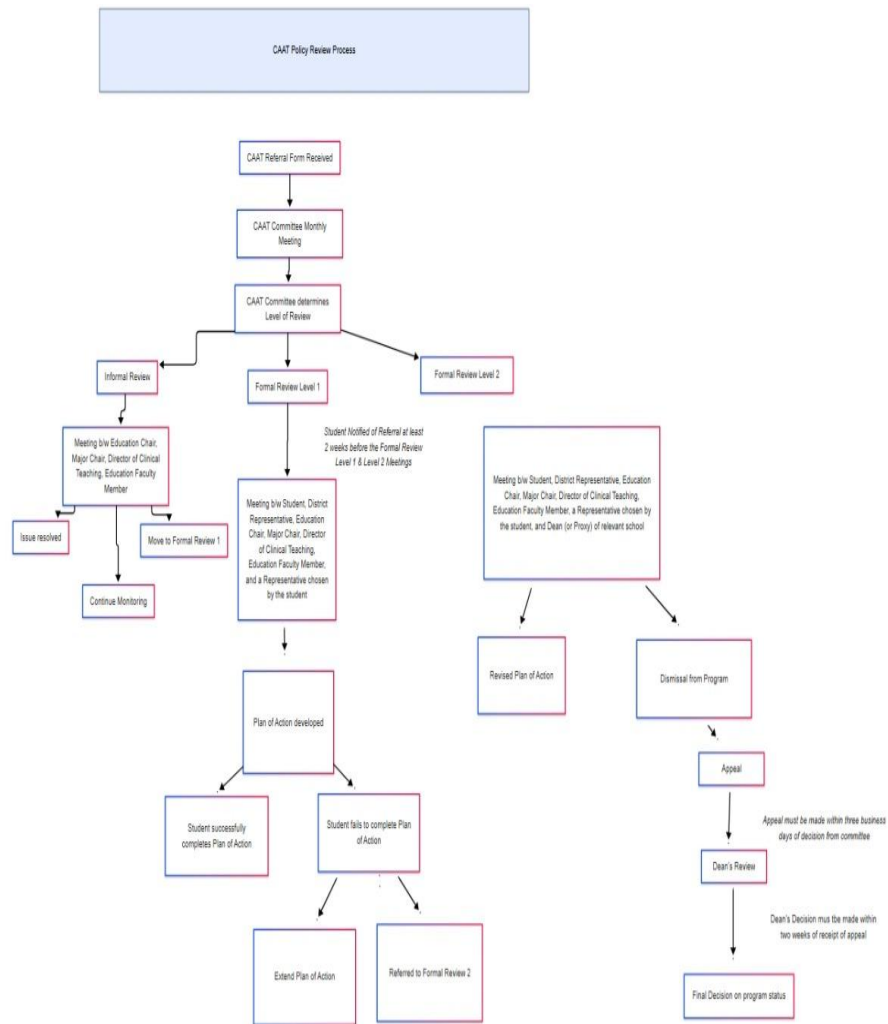
5. Acknowledgement of CAAT Policy Training

All students must submit a CAAT policy training Statement of Acknowledgement (see Appendix D) during certain predetermined educational courses. The receipts for training will be filed in the student's digital files located on the Education Department SharePoint site.

CAAT Referral for Concern Process



Education Department
One Camino Santa Maria
San Antonio, Texas 78228
210-436-3121
www.stmarytx.edu



MISSION STATEMENT

St. Mary's University, as a Catholic Marianist University, fosters the formation of people in faith and educates leaders for the common good through community, integrated liberal arts and professional education, and academic excellence.

St. Mary's University Education Department

Outstanding Education Major/Teacher Candidate Recognition Form

Education Major/Teacher Candidate Name: _____

Education Major/Teacher Candidate Email Address: _____

Semester when I observed this teacher candidate: _____

I observed this teacher in my capacity as:

- Field Supervisor
- St. Mary's University Faculty
- St. Mary's University Staff
- Campus Mentor/Cooperating Teacher
- Campus/District Administrator
- Other

I observed this Education major/teacher candidate in the following context:

- Advising/Mentoring/Tutoring
- Academics
- Field Experience
- Pre-Clinical Teaching
- Clinical Teaching
- Other

Please describe or list what motivated you to complete this form for this Education major/teacher candidate and relate it as much as possible to the CAAT policy.

Name of the person recommending the Education major/teacher candidate: _____

Recommender Email address: _____

Recommender Signature: _____

St. Mary's University Education Department
CAAT Student Referral Form

When a faculty member and/or a partner school district representative is sufficiently concerned about an Education major/ teacher candidate's fitness to teach, he or she will fill out and submit the CAAT Student Referral form.

Education Major/Teacher Candidate Name: _____

Education Major/Teacher Student ID: _____

Education Major/Teacher Candidate Email Address: _____

I observed this future teacher in my capacity as:

- Field Supervisor
- St. Mary's University Faculty
- St. Mary's University Staff
- Campus Mentor/Cooperating Teacher
- Campus/District Administrator
- Other

The area of concern is:

- Academic Competencies and Aptitudes
- Ethical Competencies and Aptitudes
- Cultural Competencies and Aptitudes
- Emotional/Social Competencies and Aptitudes
- Physical Competencies and Aptitudes
- Professional Competencies and Aptitudes
- Adherence to the StMU Student Code of Conduct
- Adherence to local school district's policies (Name of school district: _____)
- Adherence to the [Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Teacher Educators](#)

Briefly describe the student's behavior, situation, or class requirement concern prompting you to submit the referral form and the setting(s) in which it was observed. Please provide citation from the CASEL, StMU Conduct of Conduct, in describing the students' behavior.

Date: _____

Name of the person completing the referral form: _____

Email address of the person completing the referral form: _____

The initiator of this form affirms that the student was notified of this referral.

Signature of the person completing the referral form: _____

For CAAT Council Use Only:

Review Level: _____

Offense Category: _____



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St. Mary's University Education Department

Statement of Acknowledgement - Referral

I, _____, hereby acknowledge that I have met with the

(Printed Student Name)

Chair of the Education Department (or his/her designee) to discuss a concern that a teacher has submitted to the department about me.

Cause for concern is: Check all that apply.

___ Academic

___ Ethical

___ Cultural

___ Emotional/Social

___ Physical

___ Professionalism

Brief description of the specific cause for concern. Attach any additional documentation.

I understand that if I have any questions or concerns about this document, it is my responsibility to discuss it with a St. Mary's University Education Department faculty member and/or a representative from the Dean of Students.

Student Signature

Date

Education Department Chair Signature

Date

Appendix E: Statement of Acknowledgement of Training



Education Department
One Camino Santa Maria
San Antonio, Texas 78228
210-436-3121
www.stmarytx.edu

St. Mary's University Education Department Statement of Acknowledgement of Training

I, _____, hereby acknowledge and declare that I have
(Printed name)

received, read, and understand the St. Mary's University Competency and Aptitude Assessment to Teach Policy. I understand that if I have any questions or concerns about this document, it is my responsibility to discuss it with a St. Mary's University education department faculty member.

Signature

Date

The signed Statement of Acknowledgement will be filed in the student's digital files located on the Education Department SharePoint site.

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