

AAQEP Annual Report for 2025

Provider/Program Name:	Abilene Christian University School of Education
End Date of Current AAQEP Accreditation Term:	June 30, 2026

PART I: Publicly Available Program Performance and Candidate Achievement Data

1. Overview and Context

This overview describes the mission and context of the educator preparation provider and the programs included in its AAQEP review.

Abilene Christian University (ACU), a private comprehensive university, was founded in 1906. It is affiliated with the Churches of Christ and is one of the largest private universities in the Southwest. The mission of the university is *to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world*.

Abilene Christian University earned Doctoral/Professional university status, as determined by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education in December of 2021. Also known as R3, this classification includes institutions that award at least 20 research/scholarship doctoral degrees each year.

The university is comprised of nine schools and colleges and offers 89 baccalaureate majors, 77 master's and specialist degree programs, and five doctoral programs. ACU includes the Abilene residential campus and ACU Dallas, an online campus, which was established in 2015. All teacher certification programs are housed on the Abilene residential campus. Our students

come from 52 states and territories and 46 countries. ACU is designated as an Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution by the Department of Education. Current recognitions and rankings can be found at the following link: <https://acu.edu/about/rankings/>.

The School of Education resides in the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, which includes the Departments of Art & Design, Communication & Sociology, History & Global Studies, Journalism & Mass Communication, Language & Literature, Music, Government & Criminal Justice, Theatre, and the School of Education. The mission of the School of Education is *to prepare exemplary, committed educators for service in diverse and multicultural communities for the glory of God*. The program is administered by the School of Education and is made up of all students seeking initial teacher certification, which includes students from three colleges and 13 academic departments. We do not currently offer any advanced certifications but do offer a 5th year Masters in Education in Teaching and Learning that includes initial teacher certification.

Public Posting URL

Part I of this report is posted at the following web address (accredited members filing this report must post at least Part I):

<https://acu.edu/academics/arts-humanities-social-sciences/teacher-education/#teachaccred>

2. Enrollment and Completion Data

Table 1 shows current enrollment and recent completion data, disaggregated by program and license/certificate, for each program included in the AAQEP review.

Table 1. Program Specification: Enrollment and Completers for Academic Year 2024-2025

Degree or Program offered by the institution/organization	Certificate, License, Endorsement, or Other Credential granted by the state	Number of Candidates Enrolled in most recently completed academic year (12 months ending 07/31/25)	Number of Completers in most recently completed academic year (12 months ending 07/31/25)
<i>Programs that lead to initial teaching credentials</i>			
Bachelor of Science	Initial Certification: EC-6 Core Subjects with STR	43	18
	Initial Certification: 4-8 Science	1	
	Initial Certification: 7-12 Math	2	

	Initial Certification: 4-8 Social Studies	3	
	Initial Certification: 7-12 Social Studies	1	2
	Initial Certification: 7-12 History	1	
	Initial Certification: 4-8 Mathematics	1	
Bachelor of Arts	Initial Certification: 7-12 ELAR	1	
	Initial Certification: EC-12 Languages other than English - Spanish		2
Bachelor of Music	Initial Certification: EC-12 Music	14	9
Bachelor of Fine Art	Initial Certification: EC-12 Theater	2	2
	Initial Certification: EC-12 Art	2	2
Masters of Teaching and Learning	Initial Certification: EC-6 Core Subjects with STR	1	5
	Initial Certification: 4-8 ELAR with STR	2	1
	Initial Certification: 7-12 Life Science		1
	Initial Certification: 4-8 Mathematics	1	1
	Initial Certification: 7-12 Social Studies		2
	Initial Certification: EC-12 Music	1	2
Special Education Supplemental Certificate		4	
TOTALS:		76	47

Added or Discontinued Programs

Any programs within the AAQEP review that have been added or discontinued within the past year are listed below. (This list is required only from providers with accredited programs.)

N/A

3. Program Performance Indicators

The program performance information in Table 2 applies to the academic year indicated in Table 1.

Table 2. Program Performance Indicators

A. Total enrollment in the educator preparation programs shown in Table 1. This figure is an unduplicated count, i.e., individuals earning more than one credential may be counted in more than one line above but only once here.
76
B. Total number of unique completers (across all programs) included in Table 1. This figure is an unduplicated count, i.e., individuals who earned more than one credential may be counted in more than one line above but only once here.
47
C. Number of recommendations for certificate, license, or endorsement included in Table 1.
46
D. Cohort completion rates for candidates who completed the various programs within their respective program's expected timeframe and in 1.5 times the expected timeframe.
100%
E. Summary of state license examination results , including teacher performance assessments, and specification of any examinations on which the pass rate (cumulative at time of reporting) was below 80%.
<p>Candidates in our EC-6, Grades 4-8, Secondary, and All-Levels programs are largely successful on state license examinations. Results of all certification exams can be found in Table 3 below. Of note from that data is that 100% of candidates passed the following certification exams on their first attempt -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EC-6 English Language Arts (ELAR, n=23) • ESL (n=14) • 4-8 ELAR (n=1) • 4-8 Social Studies (n=1) • 7-12 Math (n=1) • EC-12 Art (n=3) • EC-12 Theatre (n=2) <p>Additionally, the following exams had a 90% or more passing rate on students' first attempt -</p>

- EC-6 Fine Arts, Health, and PE (96%; n=23)
- EC-6 Math (92%; n=24)
- EC-6 Science (96%; n=24)
- Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR; n=41; 96%)
- Science of Teaching Reading (STR; 96%; n=25)

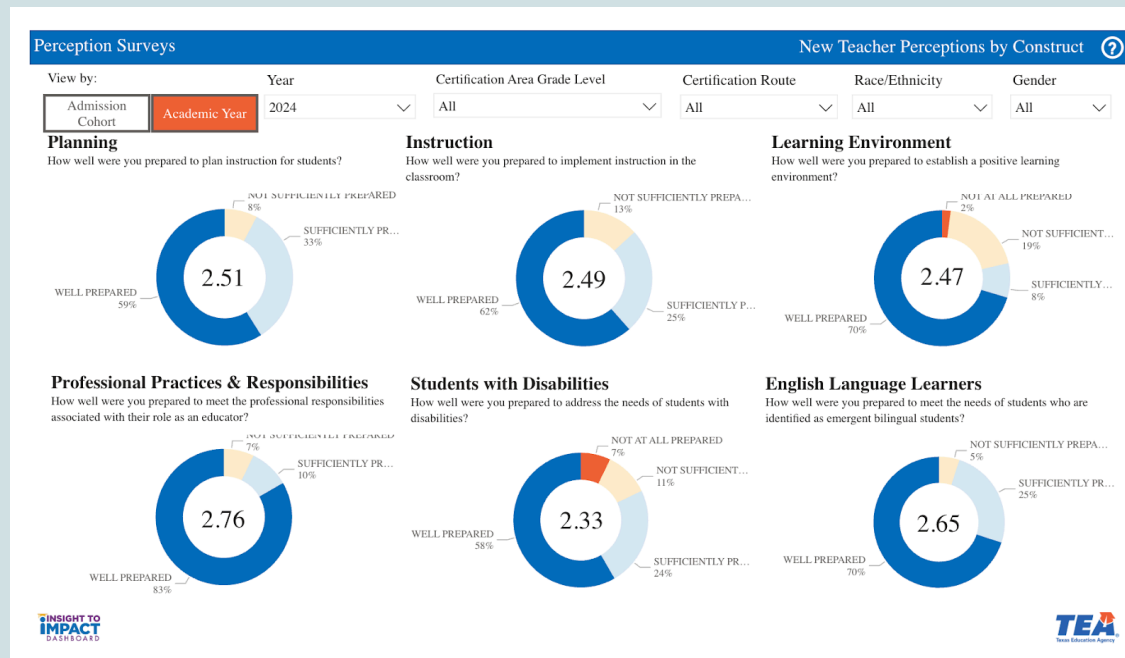
The following exams had a 90% or higher passing rate by the students' second attempt on the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR; 100%), EC-6 Math (96%), Science (100%), Social Studies (92%), and Fine Arts, Health, and PE (100%), Science of Teaching Reading (STR; 100%), and All-Levels Music (100%).

There are two examinations in which our passing rate by the second examination was not 100%, these include the 7-12 Social Studies (66%) and EC-12 Spanish (50%) exams. While these percentages can appear problematic, we also have to consider that we have a small number of students taking each of these exams and the depth and breadth of content make each of them challenging to prepare for. We are working closely with our colleagues in the History and Language & Literature departments to align curriculum and strengthen our preparation strategies for students taking these particular exams. In addition to closer alignment of content, we are working to find effective and cost-effective programs, including Certify Teacher, 240 Tutoring, and Learning Liaisons, to offer students across content areas support as they prepare for their certification exams

F. Explanation of **evidence available from program completers**, with a characterization of findings.

In the week before graduation, Clinical Teachers are asked to complete a series of program feedback processes, including an end of program survey in which they are prompted to evaluate their experiences in the classroom, field placements, and clinical teaching experiences. Data from program completers who submitted feedback in the 2024-2025 school year (N = 32) suggests that students felt most prepared in lesson planning (94%), content-specific pedagogy (84%), and teacher presence (81%). Completers reported that they felt under-prepared for working with families (66%), data collection and analysis (30%), and behavior management (25%).

Additional data on program completers is available through Texas's survey of first year teachers. This survey asks questions on a three-point scale, three being *well prepared*, two being *sufficiently prepared*, one being *not sufficiently prepared*, and zero being *not at all prepared*. In previous years data from this survey were reported in spreadsheet format, beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year, data was made available in visual format for EPPs on TEA's *Insight Impact Dashboard*, a new platform that the state has rolled out for data collection. Data from the New Teacher Perceptions Survey can be viewed below.

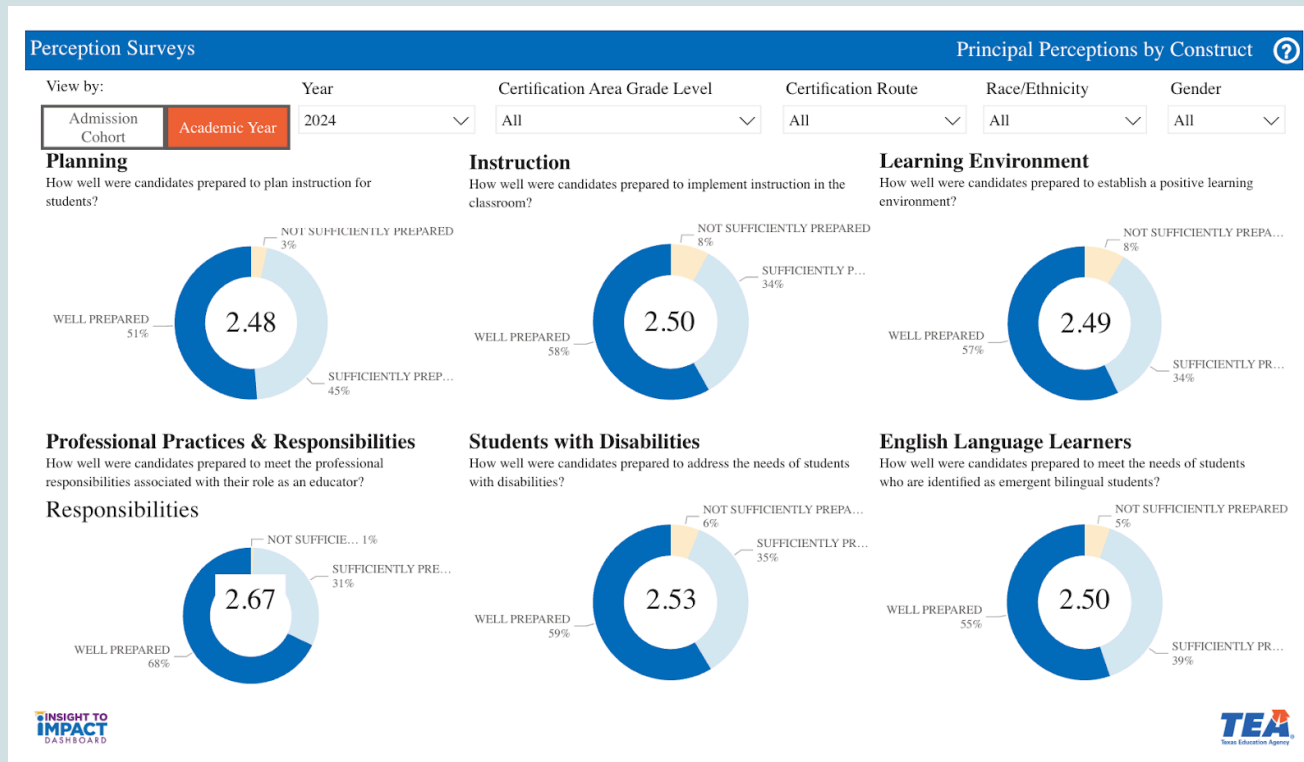


Looking more closely at the data by construct, program completers were most pleased with their preparation in the areas of professional practices and responsibilities (2.76), English Language Learners (2.65), and planning (2.51). Areas that received the lowest ratings were working with students with disabilities (2.33) and learning environment (2.47). Lower confidence with students with disabilities are similar to those reported by new teachers across the state, they indicate the work that we are doing in our professional education sequence, specifically in SPED 371 and EDUC 476, is time well-spent. The lower confidence with establishing a positive learning environment is demonstrative of the increasing complexity of management in today's classrooms. We receive similar feedback related to behavior and management from discussions with our clinical teachers and Rookies as well. In response to this data, we have been working as a faculty to work with clinical teachers and Rookies to uncover trends related to behaviors and classroom management challenges so that we can better support them and adjust course content accordingly.

Overall, this data suggests that students are largely pleased with their preparation upon completing our program. Moving forward, we will need to focus our attention and energy on strengthening our curriculum and experiences related to SPED populations and creating a positive learning environment.

G. Explanation of **evidence available from employers of program completers**, with a characterization of findings.

The state of Texas sends an annual survey to principals asking for feedback on their first year teachers' preparation. Similarly to the Teacher Survey referenced above, principals are asked to rate first year teachers on a three-point scale, three being *well prepared*, two being *sufficiently prepared*, one being *not sufficiently prepared*, and zero being *not at all prepared*. In previous years data from this survey were reported in spreadsheet format, beginning in the 2023-2024 academic year, data was made available in visual format for EPPs on TEA's *Insight Impact Dashboard*. Data from the Principal Perceptions Survey can be found below.



Using data from the *Principal Perceptions by Construct* report, principals were most pleased with program completers' preparation in the areas of professional practices and responsibilities (PPR; 2.67), working with students with disabilities (2.53) and English Language Learners (2.50), as well as instruction (2.50). Areas that received the lowest ratings were learning environment (2.49) and planning (2.48), in which the majority of principals reported that students were either well prepared (environment - 51%; planning - 57%) or sufficiently prepared (environment - 45%; planning - 34%).

This data adds to our knowledge of the potential strengths and weaknesses of our program. Specifically, it suggests that our students are able to meet professional responsibilities/requirements and are strong in instructional practices. The data also

contributes to the case for continuing to strengthen our candidates' knowledge and experience in the areas of students with learning and language exceptionalities as well as behavior and classroom management.

H. Explanation of how the program investigates **employment rates for program completers**, with a characterization of findings. This section may also indicate rates of completers' ongoing education, e.g., graduate study.

Clinical teachers are asked to report their next steps and employment data during our end of program feedback process. Additionally, clinical teaching supervisors update records as jobs are reported in the winter and summer breaks. Of our 47 completers from the 2024-2025 school year, 44 are employed as teachers. Of the 44 completers in the classroom, 39 are employed in Texas public schools, three are employed at private schools, and two are teaching out of state (Alabama and North Carolina). Of those completers not in the classroom, one is serving as a long-term substitute while she seeks a good-fit school, one is employed at a local church as a music minister, and one is pursuing graduate studies in music.

In addition to our most recent graduates, TEA's *Insight to Impact Dashboard*, also gives us access to retention numbers across cohorts going back to the cohort that began teaching in the 2020-2021 academic year. Of the 44 that began teaching in the 2020-2021 academic year, 32 are still in Texas Public Schools. Of the 15 candidates that entered teaching in the 2021-2022 academic year, 11 are still in the classroom. Of the 12 completers that entered the classroom in the 2022-2023 academic year, ten are still in the classroom. Our retention percentages across the past four years vary from 73%-84% across cohorts, which reflects the trends we are seeing in the retention of novice teachers across the country. It's important to remember that this data was likely profoundly impacted by shifts in educational policy and perception and changes in the family structures of our young teachers.

Overall, our students are able to quickly find jobs in the districts/areas they are most interested in teaching, and the majority remain in the classroom.

I. Explanation of how the **staffing capacity** for program delivery and administration and quality assurance system monitoring have changed during the reporting year, if at all, and how capacity matches the current size of the program.

All faculty are fully qualified to teach their assigned courses and provide clinical supervision. Texas Education Code requires that all supervisors have a teaching license but it does not require that the license was issued in Texas. All of our supervisors hold a teaching certificate. Supervisors are trained annually by the Director of Clinical Teaching and also attend the required Texas Education Agency approved training every three years. This is all documented by the Director of Clinical Teaching and meets all necessary state requirements per Texas Education Code.

Faculty in the School of Education at this time are working at or beyond capacity. In the 2024-2025 academic school year, the School of Education is covering 77 credit hours with adjuncts or faculty members working in overload. This load will not be sustainable for faculty. In addition, the School of Education supervises all of its own clinical teachers. No adjunct faculty are used in supervision. As the state requirements have increased for clinical teaching, this impacts faculty load. In the past, faculty could supervise three to four clinical teachers and that would be equivalent to a three hour course load. This is no longer true. At this time, based on program and state requirements for clinical teaching, two clinical teachers should be considered a three hour

course load. Due to the large number of adjunct faculty being used, the large number of faculty teaching in overload and the increased requirements for supervision of clinical teachers, the School of Education will be advocating for new faculty moving forward.

Abilene Christian University has a building dedicated to the School of Education. The former Burford Music Hall was converted to an Education Building in 2006. In 2013, it was officially christened as the Phillips Education Building. The building has five dedicated classrooms of various sizes, multiple offices, a large conference room and multiple storage closets. Additionally, there are two office suites. One is the office suite for the School of Education and contains 2 smaller meeting rooms, the office of the Chair and Director of the School of Education, a lobby with workspace for the administrative coordinator and a workroom. The Dean of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences also has a suite of offices in our building. Both ends of the building have spacious foyers that are designed to be areas where students can work and study.

The School of Education is fully funded by the university. Additionally, we benefit from strong fundraising. The past president of ACU, Dr. Royce Money, is a strong supporter of the School of Education and teachers. He and his family have a long tradition of service through public and private school teaching. For many years, we have enjoyed the benefits of his support. The current president, Dr. Phil Schubert, is also a strong supporter of the School of Education. His wife is a local educator. At this time, the School of Education has approximately 50 designated scholarships for our students. The only departments with more scholarships at ACU are the School of Business and the School of Biblical Studies. In the 2024-2025 academic year, more than 1.4 million dollars was gifted to our program.

As we serve a traditional undergraduate population with students between the ages of 18-22, our students typically live close to campus and we can utilize a typical university schedule. At times, students may have transportation challenges. This is easily solved during field placement courses as they can carpool with their classmates. In clinical teaching, we place them at a campus where there is another ACU clinical teacher so that they can have consistent transportation. Financial support is also provided. Once a student is in the School of Education, we are able to use our financial resources to help support them. All students who qualify are encouraged to apply for scholarships and all applicants receive financial support based on need. Funds are protected for students in their clinical teaching semester as it is preferred that they not work during the week while clinical teaching. Due to the substantial number of financial gifts received by the School of Education last year, the chair of the department is working with Financial Services to award partial scholarships to all clinical teachers moving forward. While we will not be able to pay for the entire clinical teaching semester, it is our hope we can offset the cost substantially.

In addition to the funding battles of the past three years in Texas, there have been several substantial changes to Texas Administrative Code (TAC). These are the laws that regulate the certification of teachers by universities and other programs in the state of Texas. The most significant changes were adopted in the spring of 2024 to be implemented the following September at the start of the year. The following are the changes that most impacted our program:

- Clinical teaching hours can only count if they take place in an **authentic school setting**. TAC defined this as the instructional time from the first bell of the day until the last bell of the day. Hours spent in professional development, before or after school tutoring, workdays when students are not present and any practices or extracurricular events that do not happen in the school day no longer count for the clinical teaching hours. This had wide implications for our program and required the expansion of the clinical teaching experience. In the past, our program had been counting workdays,

professional development days and extracurricular events like summer band as we considered them part of the professional experiences of a teacher. Additionally, these events are included as part of the teacher's contract. However, we could no longer count the hours our students spend engaged in these activities.

- **Co-teaching** was elevated to the preferred method for all clinical teaching experiences. While we are familiar with this model and train our graduate clinical teachers and their cooperating teachers on the model, for the first time, we needed to prepare and train our undergraduate cooperating teachers.
- Field hours required prior to clinical teaching moved from 30 hours to **50** hours. While this was not a challenge for our elementary education majors, it did require additional added hours for our secondary and all levels pre-service teachers. Additionally, TAC stated for the first time that these hours could not be completed until the student was formally admitted to the School of Education. This meant that the students Bell to Bell Experience, in their Introduction to Education course no longer counted. Bell to Bell is an experience where sophomore level students shadow a teacher in their chosen certification area and then complete structured reflections about their observations and experiences. Again, this was most problematic for our secondary and all levels certification candidates.
- Each field based experience prior to clinical teaching now requires a **written reflection** for each individual event. TAC states that each reflection must be unique and must include a detailed description of the field based experience and the educational practices that were experienced and/or observed.
- Field supervisors must be trained **yearly**. The previous rule only required one training. This training is delivered by the educator preparation program. Additionally, field supervisors must attend a TEA approved field supervisor training every three years.
- **Informal observations** were added as a requirement. In addition to the four 45 minute observations, field supervisors must now do three informal observations of 15 minutes. These must be documented. The first informal observation must be done in person but the remaining can be done virtually. The clinical teacher must target a skill they wish their supervisor to observe. Written feedback must be provided to the clinical teacher and there must be a post conference.
- Clinical teaching for the state of Texas shifted from a number of required days to the number of required hours. The new requirement is **490 hours**. This change, coupled with the new stipulations about what is considered "an authentic school setting," increased the amount of time clinical teachers need to be in schools. Additionally, as we work with many school districts, this requires calculating the number of hours with the school calendar for each district in which we place clinical teachers.

These changes required a quick shift in policies and procedures to implement them for the fall of 2024. The entire faculty team worked on these changes. Additionally, new methods for documentation were created to document effectively for TEA that these things were happening. The team that worked the most on the implementation of these policies included the professors in the senior level internship courses (Dr. Joe McNulty, Dr. Kim Hardin and Julie Douthit) in conjunction with the Director of Clinical Teaching, Mitzi Adams. As all programs in Texas were struggling to adjust to the new policies quickly, the chair of the department also communicated frequently with other deans and chairs from Schools of Education across the state. All the above also had to be communicated to all of the school partners in the area as well. This was done in partnership with the Big Country Teacher

Center, a consortium of the three certifying universities, the region service center, and local human resource directors from each school district in the area.

4. Candidate Academic Performance Indicators

Tables 3 and 4 report on select measures (3 to 5 measures for each standard) of candidate/completer performance related to AAQEP Standards 1 and 2, including the program's expectations for performance (criteria for success) and indicators of the degree to which those expectations are met.

Table 3. Expectations and Performance on Standard 1: Candidate and Completer Performance

Provider-selected measures (name and description)	Criteria for success	Level or extent of success in meeting the expectation						
Dispositions The Dispositions Review is a programmatically developed rubric that measures students' dispositions and characteristics related to the field of teaching. This is a 23-item rubric with sections that include <i>Effective Communication</i> , <i>Reflective Practice</i> , <i>Professionalism</i> , <i>Emotional Maturity</i> , and <i>Integrity</i> . Candidates are rated on a four point scale from <i>Proficient</i> (4) to <i>Needs Improvement</i> (1), with zero being not observed. Students are assessed formatively and given feedback using the Dispositions rubric multiple times throughout the program at the sophomore (EDUC 211), junior (READ 322/363), senior (Block), and Clinical Teaching levels.	By the Clinical Teaching semester, students are expected to score a 70 on the Dispositions Review with no ratings of a 1.	All rubrics are kept in students' permanent files. All teacher candidates met standard at for each benchmarking period. Formal data is summarized below for all Clinical Teaching Dispositions completed during the 2024-2025 school year: Clinical Teaching Dispositions (N =47) <table> <tr> <th>Met Standard</th><th>Mean Score*</th><th>Standard Deviation</th></tr> <tr> <td>100%</td><td>96.32</td><td>4.52</td></tr> </table> * Out of a possible 100	Met Standard	Mean Score*	Standard Deviation	100%	96.32	4.52
Met Standard	Mean Score*	Standard Deviation						
100%	96.32	4.52						
TEXES Certification Exams	The state of Texas has set the passing score of all certification tests at a scale score of 240.	Data from TEXES exams taken during the 2024-2025 school year are below.						

NOTE: 'N' represents the number of individual students who took individual certification exams, exams may have been taken multiple times to meet mastery. For reporting purposes, passing rates were calculated based on individuals passing by their second attempt. Where multiple attempts were reported, both scores are calculated into the means and standard deviations.

TEExES Certification Exams

	Exam	Met Standard	Mean Scale Score	Standard Deviation
	PPR (N=41)	100%	264.48	14.57
	ESL (N=14)	100%*	269.14	9.18
	Science of Teaching Reading (N=25)	100%	260.81	10.58
EC-6 Certification	ELAR (n=23)	100%*	275.70	11.02
	Math (n=24)	96%	264.38	18.84
	Science (n=24)	100%	266.64	16.62
	SS (n=25)	92%	253.61	24.05
	FAHPE (n=23)	100%	268.74	18.14
4-8 Certifications (N=2)	Social Studies (n=1) and ELAR (n=1)**	100%*	251	2.83
7-12 Certifications (N = 4)	Social Studies (n=3) and Math (n=1)**	75%	237.83	8.93
All Levels Certifications (N = 15)	Music (n=8)	100%	248.56	10.93
	Spanish (n=2), Theatre (n=2), and Art (n=3)	86%	250.22	17.87

* 100% Passing percentage on first attempt

** Due to small 'n,' examination reports are combined to protect privacy

Teacher Work Sample Clinical Teachers complete a Teacher Work Sample documenting a unit of study from pre assessment through planning, delivery, and post-assessment. Students are graded using a department-created rubric. Revisions were made to the rubric for the Fall of 2022, the revised rubric can be found here . Teaching Tasks This collection of assessments was designed in response to faculty and student feedback on the Teacher Work Sample. Teaching Tasks divide the work of the Teacher Work Sample into four independent tasks. Students are asked to identify the context in which they are teaching (including district, campus, classroom, and student-level data; Task 1), plan, implement, and reflect on teaching (Task 2), gather and analyze data (Task 3), and reflect on their strengths and potential areas of growth, including professional goal setting (Task 4). Tasks were piloted with a small group in the Fall of 2024 and rolled out formally with the clinical teaching cohort in the Spring of 2025.	Teacher Work Sample Standard set at 75%, which is the grade established to demonstrate mastery of this assignment. Teaching Tasks Standard is set at 40 out of 50 on each of the individual rubrics, 160 out of 200 on the cumulative tasks (80%).	Data from Teacher Work Samples collected during the Fall of 2024 are as follows: Teacher Work Sample (N = 16)		
		Met Standard	Mean Rating	Standard Deviation
		100%	90%	7.12
		Mastery standard set at 75% Data from Teaching Tasks collected during the Spring of 2025 are as follows: Teaching Tasks (N = 31)		
		Met Standard	Mean Rating	Standard Deviation
		94%	181.52 or 91%	13.22
		Mastery standard set at a score of 160, or 80%		

Table 4. Expectations and Performance on Standard 2: Completer Professional Competence and Growth

Provider-selected measures (name and description)	Criteria for success	Level or extent of success in meeting the expectation
PPR - Domain 2 PPR is the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities certification exam that all students seeking certification at any level must pass before	Our goal is for Teacher Education candidates to score a 65 or better on the Domain 2 competency of their TExES PPR exam.	Data from Domain 2 of TExES PPR exams taken by completers from the 2024-2025 school year are as follows: PPR: Domain 2 (N = 41)

being certified. Domain 2 of the PPR is <i>Creating a Positive Productive Classroom Environment</i> .		<table> <tr> <th>Met 65% Standard</th><th>Mean Score</th><th>Standard Deviation</th></tr> <tr> <td>98%</td><td>79.8%</td><td>16.78</td></tr> </table>	Met 65% Standard	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	98%	79.8%	16.78						
Met 65% Standard	Mean Score	Standard Deviation												
98%	79.8%	16.78												
<p>Teacher Work Sample - Contextual Factors</p> <p>The Instructional Decision Making section of the Teacher Work Sample requires clinical teachers to collect and analyze data at the community, district, campus, classroom, and student levels in order to identify instructional implications that will impact their teaching.</p> <p>Teaching Tasks - Task 1</p> <p>In Teaching Task 1, candidates are asked to collect and synthesize district, campus, classroom, and student-level data from their clinical teaching placement and reflect on how that knowledge will impact their planning and instruction.</p>	<p>Teacher Work Sample - Contextual Factors</p> <p>Candidates must score an eight (8) or higher (ten point maximum) on the Instructional Decision Making section to meet department expectations for that section.</p> <p>Teaching Tasks - Task 1</p> <p>Candidates must score 40/50 (80%) on the Teaching Task 1 Rubric to meet mastery on this task.</p>	<p>Data from the Contextual Factor indicator of the Teacher Work Samples collected during the Fall of 2024 are as follows:</p> <p>TWS Contextual Factors (N = 16)</p> <table> <tr> <th>Met Standard</th><th>Mean Rating</th><th>Standard Deviation</th></tr> <tr> <td>100%</td><td>9.38</td><td>0.62</td></tr> </table> <p>Data from Teaching Task 1 collected during the Spring of 2025 are as follows:</p> <p>Teaching Task 1 (N = 31)</p> <table> <tr> <th>Met Standard</th><th>Mean Rating</th><th>Standard Deviation</th></tr> <tr> <td>94%</td><td>45.29 or 91%</td><td>3.69</td></tr> </table> <p>Mastery standard set at a score of 40/50, or 80%</p>	Met Standard	Mean Rating	Standard Deviation	100%	9.38	0.62	Met Standard	Mean Rating	Standard Deviation	94%	45.29 or 91%	3.69
Met Standard	Mean Rating	Standard Deviation												
100%	9.38	0.62												
Met Standard	Mean Rating	Standard Deviation												
94%	45.29 or 91%	3.69												
<p>Observation Rubric - Environmental Criteria</p> <p>The Observation Rubric is the programmatically-developed instrument used to give feedback on formal observations in both the senior internship and clinical teaching. The Environmental Criteria from the ACU Observation Rubric include -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivates Environment of Respect and Rapport 	<p>In order to demonstrate mastery in these areas, candidates are expected to earn a score point three (3) out of four (4) possible points.</p>	<p>Data from the Environmental Criteria areas of the final Clinical Teaching Observations collected during the 2024-2025 school year can be found below.</p>												

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher Presence• Manages Materials and Supplies• Manages Transitions, Routines, and Procedures• Clearly Establishes Behavior Expectations• Responds and Manages Class Behavior• Uses Effective Behavior Supports• Appropriately Addresses Student Behavior			
Observation Environmental Factors (N=47)			
	Met Standard	Mean Rating	Standard Deviation
Cultivates Environment of Respect & Rapport	100%	3.96	0.20
Teacher Presence	98%	3.62	0.53
Manages Materials & Supplies	100%	3.81	0.40
Manages Transitions, Routines & Procedures	100%	3.64	0.49
Clearly Establishes Behavior Expectations	96%	3.57	0.58
Responds and Manages Class Behavior	96%	3.57	0.58
Uses Effective Behavior Supports	98%	3.64	0.53
Appropriately Addresses Student Behavior	100%	3.74	0.44
*Each student who did not earn a 3 or above scored a 2, "Needs Improvement." There were no 1, "Unsatisfactory," ratings in the data set.			

5. Notes on Progress, Accomplishment, and Innovation

This section describes program accomplishments, efforts, and innovations (strengths and outcomes) to address challenges and priorities over the past year.

In the past 18 months, Abilene ISD has experienced a change in leadership as they welcomed a new superintendent. The chair of the department and various leadership team members have met regularly with the new superintendent, Dr. John Kuhn, and his team, specifically the Executive Director for Innovation and Program Development, Jay Ashby, and Patti Blue, the Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. Most recently, the Dean of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Dr. Rachael Milligan, and the university Provost, Dr. Susan Lewis, have joined in these conversations. Abilene ISD approached ACU about entering into an 1882 partnership with the school district in the summer of 2025. Senate Bill 1882, signed into effect by the Texas Legislature in 2017, provides incentives for districts to contract to partner with an open-enrollment charter school, institutions of higher education, non-profits, or government entities. The incentives are largely financial. The grant program is funded by the state of Texas and approved by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). While at this time, ACU does not have the capacity to enter into a binding agreement, both the leadership of Abilene ISD and the School of Education plan to explore future options with a site visit to an 1882 school in Ft. Worth that partners with the School of Education at Texas Wesleyan University. The provost of the university has also charged the dean of the college and the chair of the department to explore potential partnerships in which ACU can offer more support to Abilene ISD. Both ACU and Abilene ISD are committed to strengthening this partnership moving forward.

In addition to these ongoing activities, Dr. Andrew Huddleston and Dr. Stephanie Talley are currently engaged in research with six participants who are all teachers in the Abilene Independent School District. The teachers are all elementary school literacy teachers from two campuses in the district. The purpose of the study is to implement a two-year professional learning community for elementary teachers in the Abilene area designed to develop their instructional adaptiveness in their literacy instruction. We are currently in the second year of this research project, which has been funded by an internal grant from the university. Our hope moving forward is to secure an external grant and continue this work with local teachers. This supports the needs of local teachers as professional development funds are usually among the first cut when funding in local schools is inadequate. This partnership also strengthens future placements for our field experiences and clinical teachers. In this way, students at all levels experience support. Working with these teachers has also allowed Dr. Huddleston and Dr. Talley to adapt and adjust the instruction that happens in the literacy sequence in our program. As we are wrestling with current issues in the reading wars with practicing teachers, we discover ways to prepare our teacher candidates to enter this conversation in their future contexts.

This year, we have also opened a Minor in Education. There are many adjacent degrees offered at ACU whose students could benefit from courses in education. Some examples included Children's Ministry, Youth Ministry, Child and Family Services, Speech and Communication Disorders, and Social Work. Students in these programs often work with or in public schools and will benefit from core educational courses. This new minor also prepares students who may enter alternative certification programs in the future. At times, students in other programs determine late in their college career that they might want to pursue teacher certification. This is usually cost-prohibitive based on tuition prices at ACU and the amount of time and money they have already invested in higher education. The minor allows them to take courses that will prepare them well for an alternative certification program and their future classrooms. Occasionally, there are situations when students in our program cannot maintain the state-required GPA in order to stay in the School of Education and certify to teach with Abilene Christian University. The minor allows them a path forward that honors and values the work they have done in their education courses. It also provides strong support for them should they choose to enter an alternative certification program in the future. As we do not currently have the capacity to offer an alternative certification program, the education minor allows us to support ACU students who may pursue alternative certification at a later time. This, in turn, supports the students who will be in their classrooms in the future.

The School of Education has also worked with the Department of Kinesiology to formulate a degree plan that would allow students in their new Coaching Minor to certify with an all levels Physical Education certification. The Department of Kinesiology launched a coaching minor that was added to the ACU catalog to begin the fall of 2024. When added, students pursuing this minor, if they wanted to pursue teaching certification, were advised to seek an alternative certification program after graduation from ACU. Capturing these students as part of our program more fully prepares them for their future teaching. Working with Dr. Melissa Long, a degree was designed that included all courses needed for the coaching minor and all the courses in the professional education sequence. Additionally, the all-levels physical education majors will take the senior level intern courses (EDUC 412/432) and do a clinical teaching semester thus meeting all state requirements for certification.

The one new pathway we are currently exploring for teacher certification pertains to our master's program. Dr. Andrew Huddleston, Director of the M.Ed. in Teaching and Learning, is exploring opportunities institutionally for secondary content majors to enter the master's program as post-baccalaureate students. This would allow students in secondary content areas who are at the end of their undergraduate program to enter the Fifth-Year Master's Program. This is in response to an increasing number of students in science fields contacting us late in their junior or senior year of college at ACU, inquiring about certification processes and programs. We feel our master's program and its year-long clinical teaching experience would prepare students better than an alternative certification program.

One area in which we are seeking growth is our special education certification programs. In the past few years, our students seeking this certification have declined. However, this is a high-needs area in the state. One way we are attempting to bolster this program is to investigate the possibility of offering a Deaf Education certification program in the future. We have already added American Sign Language courses to our special education offerings, and they are popular both in our department and across the university. We also hope to secure the budget line to hire a new faculty member whose field is special education.

Additionally, the ACU School of Education has begun an informal partnership with the National Center for Children's Illustrated Literature (NCCIL). The NCCIL is a museum dedicated to the artwork of picture books. It is free to the community. Dr. Stephanie Talley and Dr. Kim Hardin are both members of the NCCIL. This fall, in partnership with the new director at the NCCIL, Kayla Young, the School of Education hosted an event called "An Evening at the NCCIL." This event was open to all students in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. We specifically targeted education and art and design students. The featured artist this fall is Caldecott award winning author and illustrator Juana Martinez-Neal, who was in Abilene to launch the exhibit. A luncheon at the NCCIL kicked off her time in Abilene. The School of Education sponsored a table at the event and therefore is a sponsor of the exhibit. On Friday evening, Juana spent time with our ACU students at the NCCIL where she shared about the process of writing and illustrating stories; the importance of storytelling; the use of picture books in the classroom; and, did some sketching activities with our students. All students who attended were also given a copy of her award winning book *Alma and How She Got Her Name* and a handout with information about Juana and tips on how to use the book in the classroom. Juana autographed the books for students at the end of the event. Juana worked with children and their families at an event at the NCCIL on Saturday afternoon. Our sponsorship of the exhibit helped to make the free event for families and children available. Our event on Friday evening engaged our university students with a unique cultural space in the Abilene area. It is our hope to continue a strong partnership with the NCCIL moving forward as it serves both our college students and local children and families well.