

PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Alternative Teacher Certification
Program

PRINCIPAL'S HANDBOOK



Prairie View, Texas

Dear Principal,

Thank you for choosing an Intern Teacher enrolled in the Prairie View A&M University Alternative Teacher Certification Program.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a guide to ensure that this internship year is a positive and a successful one for all involved: the intern teacher, the assigned mentor teacher, and you the building administrator.

As you may well know, alternative teacher certification programs in Texas now provide a major route for the certification of teachers. Prairie View A&M University is very proud to be a part of this initiative, and we look forward to collaborating with you throughout this school year.

You may address future comments and/or questions about the Prairie View ATCP Program to the University Supervisor who will be visiting, observing, and conferencing with the mentor(s) and intern teacher(s) in your building on a regular basis throughout the school year, or you may contact the Program Coordinator or Administrative Assistant directly at (936) 261-3500.

Again, thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Dr. William H. Parker
Director, ATCP Program

PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY
College of Education
Alternative Teacher Certification Program
(ATCP)

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Prairie View A&M University and the Local Cooperative Teacher Education Center are sponsors of the Alternative Teacher Certification Program. This sponsorship came about as a result of requests from area school districts. The program began in the 1991-92 school year. The program sponsors certification in all content areas of Secondary Education and Generic Special Education PK-12.

All accepted applicants in the Alternative Teacher Certification Program must meet the state mandated minimum requirements of a bachelor's degree from an accredited university, and have an overall GPA of 2.5, 24 semester hours in a teaching field (Prairie View A&M University offers all content areas of secondary education (grades 8-12). Those seeking certification in Generic Special Education must have 24 semester hours with a minimum of 3 semester hours per course in the following: English, Social Studies, Math and Science. Each applicant must pass all three sections of the state mandated basic skills test (TASP) with the following minimum scores: Math 230, Writing 220 and Reading 260.

Accepted interns will be required to complete the following:

- Haberman Interview
- Integrated Field Experience Observation in a Public School (30 clock hours)
- 12 hours of University coursework
- New Teacher In-service Training (provided by the school district)
- Mentor-Intern Training (provided by the ATCP Program)
- On-going In-service Training as provided by the District or Region Service Centers

As in other alternative programs, interns placed as the teacher of record will be supported during the internship year by a mentor teacher who will provide day-to-day support and technical assistance. Additionally, the ATCP Supervisor will make periodic visits to the intern to observe the intern and provide guidance and assistance. District administrators will also be available to support interns. Other Prairie View A&M University staff, such as the Program Coordinator, Administrative Assistant and ATCP Director will also be available to the intern. The ATCP as developed by Prairie View A&M University has an extensive network of built in intern support.

Mentors will be required to complete nine (9) hours of mentor training. Mentor Training is now online for all mentors. Each mentor must sign the Mentor Agreement Form upon receiving a copy of instructions telling them how to go online to access the Mentor Training website. During the school year, each mentor and intern will receive release time for required monthly observations.

The principal or principal's administrative designee will observe the intern a minimum of two (2) times each semester, to include two (2) walk-throughs and a formal Appraisal. The principal or his/her designee conducts PDAS appraisals of each intern.

What are the advantages of an ATCP as opposed to a traditional college training program? Training is compressed (ATCP training is completed in one year vs. traditional programs which can be two years or more); the intern receives training while employed as a teacher of

record and earns a first year teacher salary minus the intern program fees due the university.

How do teachers trained through the ATCP program compare to other teachers? The data available at present indicates that ATCP teachers score as well as traditionally trained teachers on evaluation instruments, have a high retention rate in the profession and express a high degree of professional competence.

THE ATCP SUPPORT SYSTEM

PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Select the mentor
- Help the mentor provide assistance for the intern
- Be certain that the mentor and the intern have time to meet weekly
- Be certain that the intern is observing the mentor and other teachers as they demonstrate effective teaching strategies and classroom management techniques.
- Sign the Principal's Commitment Form provided by the Prairie View ATCP University Supervisor
- Serve as a professional role model for the mentor and intern

MENTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Complete Online Campus Mentor Training as required by the Prairie View ATCP Program
- Fulfill the role of mentor with the attitude that you are the coaching partner and maintain a protective relationship with the intern
- Provide continuous assistance during the year on instructional design, instructional delivery, completing lesson plans and classroom management
- Help arrange times to observe the intern and times for the intern to observe you, the mentor
- Advise the intern of district and building timelines and procedures
- Help the intern deal with problems as they arrive so that they can be resolved quickly
- Assist the intern in completing necessary paperwork (referrals, schedules, etc.)

INTERN RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide quality instruction for the students
- Maintain a positive learning environment in the classroom
- Ask questions if there is something you do not understand
- Provide a positive role model for students
- Record and work on suggestions made by the principal or your mentor
- Work collaboratively with the mentor to improve instructional strategies and classroom management skills

UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Complete four visits to the school site of the assigned intern, complete observation forms . (Additional visits will be made if necessary)
- Conference with the mentor to be sure that (1) weekly conferences are being held, (2) they are doing regular classroom observations of each other, (3) any problems which have arisen are solved immediately.
- Review the Documentation Book of the intern at each visit and see that all of their paperwork is kept up-to-date.
- Conference with the principal in the event a problem occurs in order that it may be solved in an appropriate manner.

PRINCIPAL'S OBSERVATIONS

Informal assessment may include walk-through observations, conferences, etc.

- The principal must complete a minimum of two (2) observations of the intern teacher. These observations should be recorded on the Principal's Observation Form located in the intern's Documentation Book.
- The intern must be formally assessed by the principal or his/her designee using the state or district's required PDAS instrument.

END OF YEAR PRINCIPAL'S RECOMMENDATION

- Upon successful completion of the internship year, and as evidenced by all satisfactory scores on the state or district's required assessment instrument, the intern will be recommended for certification by the principal.

MENTOR SELECTION QUESTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE PRINCIPAL

- Does the prospective mentor teacher have excellent communication skills?

- Is the prospective mentor teacher a successful teacher as measured by student success?

- Is the mentor teacher in close proximity with the intern and have like teaching assignments?

- When does the mentor teacher begin working with the intern?

- Does the prospective mentor teacher have a clear understanding of the responsibility in the relationship with the intern?

- Is the mentor teacher willing to attend the mentor training session provided by the ATCP program?

- Does the prospective mentor teacher know and demonstrate the Learner-Centered Teacher Proficiencies?

REQUIRED MENTOR-INTERN OBSERVATIONS

- Each intern will complete six (6) hours of observation each year. Observe teachers in your building that are teaching in your area of certification (if possible). Documented attendance at District Workshops may be substituted for these hours (if applicable).
- Each mentor will complete six (6) hours of observation of the intern and conference with the intern in their classroom.
- The mentor and intern must document these visits in writing on the Mentor forms provided.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF MENTORS

MENTOR: An experienced, CERTIFIED teacher in the same subject, or at the same level, for which the intern is to be certified.

- Each intern will be assigned a mentor.
- Selection of mentor teachers will be based on the criteria below. It will be the responsibility of the principal to select the mentor, except in the case of the library mentor. These mentors will be from another school and therefore the Bureau of Library Services will facilitate these assignments.
- Mentor Criteria:
 - ⇒Has knowledge of the Alternative Certification Program
 - ⇒Agrees with the ATCP Philosophy
 - ⇒Uses good interpersonal skills
 - ⇒Has the ability to demonstrate and verbalize effective teaching practice
 - ⇒Is a good role model
 - ⇒Is knowledgeable in the area of certification
 - ⇒Uses best, up-to-date teaching practices
 - ⇒Maintains good attendance
 - ⇒Must be certified in the area and/or at the level of the intern
 - ⇒Is a trainer or trainers
 - ⇒Is tolerant, diplomatic and flexible
 - ⇒Is willing to serve and to attend training
 - ⇒Has planning period at the same time as intern (when possible)

PROGRAM BELIEFS, GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR FIRST YEAR INTERN TEACHERS

ATCP Support System Beliefs:

- Students deserve a strong educational program
- Teachers in their first year need a support system
- Professional development is important for first year teachers

The primary goal of this program is to help first year teachers to be successful so that:

- The best possible instruction will be offered to students
- First year teachers will be inspired and motivated upon returning to the classroom the following year
- First year teachers will be self-confident professionals

The expectations are:

- First year teachers will provide instructions for students
- The first year teacher will have a support system including: the principal, the mentor, and the university supervisor

- The first year teacher will create a professional development plan to address which areas need improvement and enhance his/her strong teaching skills

FIRST YEAR INTERN TEACHER PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The ATCP Intern Should:

- Know and follow the rules, regulations and policies of the campus and/or district that he/she is employed.
- Maintain an ethical and professional attitude toward all members of the school community.
- Be available for regular planning and feedback sessions with the mentor teacher and university supervisor.
- Prepare adequate lesson plans in advance of teaching assignments and share copies with the mentor and/or university supervisor.
- Attend all of the required college courses, training, seminars, workshops, and/or review/study sessions, which are scheduled during the internship year.
- Maintain a 2.5 grade point average in college course work with no grade less than a “C.”
- Turn all required and/or requested ATCP documentation in a timely manner.
- Continually conduct self-assessment and professional growth.

- Document self-assessment and professional growth in a cumulative portfolio.
- Assume responsibility for making effective contributions to the ongoing curriculum.
- Complete required pre-assignment classroom observations.
- After assignment to a school, conduct observations of mentor and other master teachers. Discuss observations with mentor.