

SUPERINTENDENCY PRACTICUM GUIDE



College of Education

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

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Purpose of Practicum Handbook

The purpose of this guide is to expound upon all program elements relevant to superintendent certification, with a specific focus on the field practicum. The word candidate is SBEC-policy specific and is used throughout this document to refer to any student in the program that is seeking superintendent certification. This is not the same as being a doctoral/Ed.D. candidate, which is a program-specific term used to denote students that have successfully defended their thesis proposal.

Advice for Success

We suggest three simple strategies to support your successful pursuit of superintendent certification:

1. *Protect your documentation.* The process of obtaining superintendent certification in Texas is bound by many different statutes and requires the collaboration of many different organizations and sub-organizations. In life, accidents happen, and people within organizations come and go. Accordingly, it is important that you maintain protected (e.g., extra copies, cloud backup, etc.) documentation of your advancement through certification requirements (i.e., practicum activity logs, field observations, educator service records, etc.).
2. *Be proactive in building your professional network.* You never know who you will meet on campus, at work, or out in the community. The guest speaker in one of your classes could someday be interviewing you for a promotion. The woman seated next to you at the board meeting might be your new colleague. In addition to always presenting oneself in a professional light, it behooves candidates to be intentional about introducing themselves to other leaders throughout their educational and professional pursuits. Keep business cards on you. District-level leadership can be a surprisingly small world, therefore it is possible, if not likely, that someone to whom you introduce yourself will someday serve as your site or field supervisor.
3. *Stay on-track with the program.* Candidates are considered to be on-track when they continually satisfy all program requirements on time. Being on-track is essential for obtaining permission to take the superintendent exam and to be recommended for certification. Candidates are encouraged to review the *Essential Tasks* and *Critical Milestone* embedded in the Degree plan / Course sequence of the program handbook

Certification Standards

[Title 19, Part 7, §242.15](#) of the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) contains the superintendent certificate standards in their entirety, which can be viewed [here](#). The primary standards are as follows:

(b) Learner-Centered Values and Ethics of Leadership. A superintendent is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

(c) Learner-Centered Leadership and School District Culture. A superintendent is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students and shapes school district culture by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.

(d) Learner-Centered Human Resources Leadership and Management. A superintendent is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by implementing a staff evaluation and development system to improve the performance of all staff members, selects and implements appropriate models for supervision and staff development, and applies the legal requirements for personnel management.

(e) Learner-Centered Policy and Governance. A superintendent is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context and by working with the board of trustees to define mutual expectations, policies, and standards.

(f) Learner-Centered Communications and Community Relations. A superintendent is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

(g) Learner-Centered Organizational Leadership and Management. A superintendent is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by leadership and management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

(h) Learner-Centered Curriculum Planning and Development. A superintendent is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the design and implementation of curricula and strategic plans that enhance teaching and learning; alignment of curriculum, curriculum resources, and assessment; and the use of various forms of assessment to measure student performance.

(i) Learner-Centered Instructional Leadership and Management. A superintendent is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school district culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

Certification Requirements

The primary policies that shape eligibility for superintendent certification derive from SBEC and are codified in Title 19 of the TAC. Per [Part 7, §242.20](#), the following requirements must be met in order to obtain superintendent certification in the state of Texas:

- Successfully complete the required exam
- Successfully complete an approved superintendent preparation program (an embedded aspect of the Ed.D. in Professional Leadership K-12 program)
- Hold a master's degree from a university that is accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- Hold a principal certificate or the equivalent issued by the TEA, another state, or country; or
 - Have three creditable years of managerial experience in a school district. Experience must include responsibility for:
 - supervising or appraising faculty or staff;
 - conducting district-level planning and coordination of programs, activities, or initiatives; and
 - creating or maintaining a budget.

There are additional program-specific requirements for superintendent certification that are discussed in the next section.

Program Requirements

Before the program will recommend to the College of Education Certification Office that you be recommended to TEA for superintendent certification, we must document the following:

- Successfully complete the superintendent certification program of study. This includes the following courses:
 - ELCS 8310 – *The Superintendency*
 - ELCS 7392 – *Internship in Superintendency*
 - ELCS 8361 – *Public & Community Relations*
 - ELCS 8350 – *Resource Management*
 - ELCS 8356 – *Program & Policy Evaluation*
- Successfully undergone three field observations
- Successfully logged 160 hours of practicum activities
- Successfully passed Texas Examination of Educator Standards – Superintendent (TExES 195)
- Hold a master’s degree
- Hold principal certification
- Because of the way that TEA categorizes the superintendent certification pathway presently approved at the University of Houston, **candidates must complete the Ed.D. in Professional Leadership K-12 program (graduate) before they can be formally recommended for standard superintendent certification.**

Before the program will recommend to the College of Education Certification Office that a candidate be approved for TExES 195, we must verify the candidate is on-track (more on this later) and in their seventh overall semester in the program. The seventh overall semester is when all on-track candidates complete the superintendency preparation program of study. View the Degree plan / Course sequence in the program handbook for further information.

Elements of the Practicum

The field-based practicum is where candidates demonstrate proficiency in each of the superintendent certification standards.

People

There are many individuals with differing roles involved in the practicum experience. Two of the key individuals are identified below via labels consistent with TEA/SBEC policy.

Program Director

For the purposes of superintendent certification practicum, the Program Director is the same individual that serves as Program Director of the Ed.D. in Professional Leadership K-12. As of spring of 2023, that individual is Dr. Bradley Davis (bdavis20@central.uh.edu). **The Program Director serves as the primary point of contact for submitting practicum documentation**, as well as the liaison between site supervisors, field supervisors, UH, and partner districts.

Site Supervisor

The following is from [TAC Title 19, Part 7, §228.2](#):

(31) Site supervisor--For a practicum candidate, an educator who has at least three years of experience in the aspect(s) of the certification class being pursued by the candidate; who is collaboratively assigned by the campus or district administrator and the educator preparation program (EPP); who is currently certified in the certification class in which the practicum candidate is seeking certification; who has completed training by the EPP, including training in how to coach and mentor candidates, within three weeks of being assigned to a practicum candidate; who is an accomplished educator as shown by student learning; who guides, assists, and supports the candidate during the practicum; and who reports the candidate's progress to the candidate's field supervisor.

In the case of superintendent certification, the site supervisor is someone within the candidate's district who themselves has superintendent certification. The site supervisor is someone that can assist the candidate in identifying relevant, district-level, leadership-oriented experiences that can satisfy the required 160 clock-hours of field activity. Candidates should be intentional about building their professional network as they progress through the program. Site supervisors should be someone with whom the candidate is familiar and can rely upon for professional guidance. Accordingly, candidates should be proactive in identifying and recruiting a suitable site supervisor. Students struggling to identify a willing site supervisor should immediately reach out to the Program Director.

Immediately upon identifying a willing site supervisor, students should submit the candidate supervisor's contact information to the Program Director. Site supervisors should be procured by the end of week one of semester four, which is also the first week of the practicum. The Program Director will review the candidate supervisor's credentials to ensure compliance with 19 TAC §228.35. Within three weeks of their formal assignment, site supervisors will be provided training by the program.

Field Supervisor

The following is from [TAC Title 19, Part 7, §228.2](#):

(16) Field supervisor--A currently certified educator, hired by the educator preparation program, who preferably has advanced credentials, to observe candidates, monitor their performance, and

provide constructive feedback to improve their effectiveness as educators. A field supervisor shall have at least three years of experience and current certification in the class in which supervision is provided. A field supervisor shall be an accomplished educator as shown by student learning. A field supervisor with experience as a campus-level administrator and who holds a current certificate that is appropriate for a principal assignment may also supervise classroom teacher, master teacher, and reading specialist candidates. A field supervisor with experience as a district-level administrator and who holds a current certificate that is appropriate for a superintendent assignment may also supervise principal candidates. If an individual is not currently certified, an individual must hold at least a master's degree in the academic area or field related to the certification class for which supervision is being provided and comply with the same number, content, and type of continuing professional education requirements described in §232.11 of this title (relating to Number and Content of Required Continuing Professional Education Hours), §232.13 of this title (relating to Number of Required Continuing Professional Education Hours by Classes of Certificates), and §232.15 of this title (relating to Types of Acceptable Continuing Professional Education Activities). A field supervisor shall not be employed by the same school where the candidate being supervised is completing his or her clinical teaching, internship, or practicum. A mentor, cooperating teacher, or site supervisor, assigned as required by §228.35(f) of this title (relating to Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training), may not also serve as a candidate's field supervisor.

The short version is that the field supervisor is an accomplished educator with superintendent certification and three years of experience in district-level leadership (does not need to be a superintendent). The site supervisor cannot double as one's field supervisor. Unlike with site supervisors, the program assigns field supervisors to students at the beginning of each semester in which a field observation is required (semesters 4-6)

Processes

160 Hours

Per [TAC Title 19, Part 7, §228.35.e.8](#), “each EPP shall provide a practicum for a minimum of 160 clock-hours whereby a candidate must demonstrate proficiency in each of the educator standards for the certificate class being sought”. This means that students, in collaboration with their site supervisor, should identify practicum activities that will allow them to demonstrate **district-level leadership capacity** in each of the eight superintendent certification standards. Accordingly, practicum activity logs should reflect some exposure to all standards. That said, the distribution of hours across the standards need not be equal. The 160 hours are to be gathered during specific courses in the program. The breakdown for cohorts beginning in fall of 2019 and later is as follows (earlier cohorts should refer to the degree plan / course schedule in their program handbook):

- ELCS 7392 – *Internship in Superintendent* [semester 4]
 - 100 hours
- ELCS 8361 – *Public & Community Relations* [semester 5]
 - 30 hours
- ELCS 8350 – *Resource Management* [semester 6]
 - 30 hours

Below is an offering of suggested activities, broken down by standard. Students who are finding it difficult to log practicum hours should work in close collaboration with their site supervisor to identify specific opportunities.

Standard	Suggested Activities
(b) Learner-Centered Values and Ethics of Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as a member of a district-level committee related to ethics/values • Provide a presentation for district-level personnel on the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics • Lead a district-level training related to ethics/values • Facilitate a table group at a district training or district committee meeting • Facilitate/participate in a wellness program aimed at physical and emotional wellness of district employees and/or students • Review TAC Title 19, Part 7, §247 and assess whether/how the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators are demonstrated by district leadership
(c) Learner-Centered Leadership and School District Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve on a district-level committee that promotes high expectations, and academic rigor for self, student, and staff performance • Serve on the district steering committee for the development of a shared district vision that focuses on teaching and learning • Conduct and analyze school district/campus climate inventories for effective and responsive decision making • Assist with district efforts to ensure the accomplishment of school district goals and objectives to achieve the school district's vision • Provide a district-level presentation on emerging issues and trends affecting the education community • Serve on a district grant writing committee relating to the accomplishment of school district goals and objectives • Attend the State of the District • Attend board meetings • Attend DEIC meeting • Attend Personnel Services meeting • Attend District End of Year Celebration • Attend and engage in celebrations with education/community stakeholders
(d) Learner-Centered Human Resources Leadership and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate process overview of teacher evaluation • Explore/Participate in teacher hiring process • Participate/coordinate in professional learning at the district-level • Participate in recruitment at career fair • Participate in employee satisfaction survey process
(e) Learner-Centered Policy and Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve on the district Code of Conduct committee • Communicate with state representative on school issues • Attend/report on board meetings

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in state organizations and meetings • Attend legislative hearings, whether city, council, state, or otherwise • Provide training/updates on policy developments • Directly support the explicit recognition/awarding of excellent faculty and staff throughout district
(f) Learner-Centered Communications and Community Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve on district committees that recognize and celebrate contributions of community toward realization of the school district's vision • Assist with district efforts to promote multicultural awareness and the appreciation of diversity in the education community • Meet and explore opportunities with community partners (e.g. Chambers of Commerce, Rotary, charities, etc.) • Engage with the media (with district approval) through letter writing, interviews, expertise, etc.
(g) Learner-Centered Organizational Leadership and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the district budget and summarize/critique how the funds are utilized • Review new/developing education-related House or Senate bills. Choose one or more bills and develop an implementation plan that includes all stakeholders in the district. • Explore the planning and development of the current technology replacement cycle. Using the district budget, develop a 10-year replacement cycle that aligns with the district improvement plan. Include the following components in the replacement cycle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Process ○ Survey ○ Critical Components ○ Current State of Technology ○ Committee Recommendations ○ Action Plans ○ Infrastructure Equipment ○ Student Learning Choices ○ Training/Professional Development • Participate in budget development/review processes • Conduct/participate in a financial audit
(h) Learner-Centered Curriculum Planning and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in curriculum development process • Attend meetings with curriculum directors • Review curriculum alignment • Conduct/participate in a curriculum audit
(i) Learner-Centered Instructional Leadership and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in district-level administrative meeting • Participate in administrative vertical team (feeder pattern) meeting • Develop professional learning focused on the implementation of sound, research-based theories and techniques • Meet with and participate in district-level instructional coaching/coaches' activities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide/coordinate training on best practices in instructional leadership and management • Consume and convey recent, relevant, peer-reviewed research on best practices
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Per 19 TAC §228.35(e)(8), the 160 hours of practicum activities must be documented and given final approval by the site supervisor as indicated via signature. The process for submitting documentation of your 160 superintendent practicum clock-hours is as follows:

- Unless directed otherwise by a course instructor, students will use the form for documenting practicum hours that is available in the appendix of this guide.
- At the end of each course tied to the 160 hours (ELCS 7392, ELCS 8361, & ELCS 8350), students will use their official UH E-mail to send their completed forms *-with site supervisor signature-* to the Program Director. Logs must be a single PDF with signature page included.
- The Program Director will review submitted forms for completion and accuracy, then sign and send them back to the student. Copies of the final, signed forms will be stored by the Program Director in UH's secure SharePoint.
- In all, students should submit three separate forms documenting practicum hours: one for each of the courses in which they obtain hours.

Field Observations

Through your time in the program, you will undergo three observations performed by your field supervisor. The following requirements for field observations are set forth in [TAC Title 19, Part 7, §228.35.h](#):

- Field observations needs to be 135 minutes in total duration (this is the combined passage of time across all three observations – three 45 minute observations would satisfy this requirement)
- Each observation should:
 - Have an individualized pre-observation conference between field supervisor and candidate
 - Have an individualized post-observation conference between field supervisor and candidate
 - Be documented via forms available in appendix. Completed forms should be provided to:
 - the candidate
 - the candidate's site supervisor
 - the program coordinator
 - Of note: neither the pre-observation conference nor the post-observation conference need to be onsite.

Field observations occur during specific courses in the program. The breakdown is as follows:

- ELCS 7392 – *Internship in Superintendent*
 - First field observation
- ELCS 8361 – *Public & Community Relations*
 - Second field observation
- ELCS 8350 – *Resource Management*
 - Third field observation

The process for undergoing and submitting documentation of your three field observations is as follows:

- The Program Director will assign trained field supervisors to superintendent certification seeking students during the first week of each semester in which a field observation is to take place. It is the student's responsibility to follow-up with the field supervisor and ensure the observation cycle is completed. If you encounter any issues, contact the Program Director.
- The dates of initial contact for each field observation will be documented in the form for field observations that is available in the appendix.
- Field supervisors send their completed forms to the Program Director at the conclusion of each semester.
- The Program Director will ensure that all signed and dated field observations are stored on UH's secure SharePoint. The Program Director will then send final versions out to candidates for their records.

TEExES 195

Passage of the TEExES 195 is prerequisite for superintendent certification. As mentioned previously, students cannot register to take the exam unless they are a) on-track in the program, and b) in their seventh overall semester in the program. Again, **the seventh overall semester is when all on-track students complete the superintendent preparation program of study**. The full list of program requirements for establishing eligibility to take the TEExES 195 include:

- On-track and in seventh overall semester of Ed.D. program
 - 12 graded, passing credit hours in the superintendent certification program
 - 160 practicum hours
 - have completed three field observations
- master's degree
- principal certification

The TEExES 195 is a 110 item, multiple-choice, computer-administered examination. Students are provided five hours to complete the exam. The exam material covers the three domains of the superintendency as described in the TEA/Pearson preparation manual (available [here](#)). The preparation manual is an excellent resource and all candidates are very strongly encouraged to work through it.

There are three types of questions on the exam: single questions (they stand alone from other questions), decision sets (based upon a described scenario), and clustered questions (often based upon data sources like [Texas Academic Performance Reports](#)).

Once students enter their seventh semester in the program, they should contact the Program Director via official UH E-mail to request a recommendation to the College of Education Certification Office for exam permission. As of January 2023, the cost of the exam is \$116, and students can learn more about how to register [here](#).

Exam preparation material will be folded into regular coursework.

Process for Obtaining Superintendent Certification

Because of the way that TEA categorizes the superintendent certification pathway presently approved at the University of Houston, candidates must complete the Ed.D. in Professional Leadership K-12 program before being formally recommended for standard superintendent certification. This is a non-negotiable element of the certification process.

Upon degree conferral, students should contact the Program Director via official UH E-mail to request recommendation for superintendent certification. The Program Director will audit the student's file to ensure all required documentation is on file. Once the audit is completed, the Program Director will request that the Certification Office submit formal recommendation, copying the candidate. This process typically takes 3 to 5 business days.

Certification Office Contact Information

The College of Education Certification Office supports students during certain elements in the process of earning state certification. Candidates will deal directly with Certification Office staff after they have been nominated by the program for examination permission or for certification. Their contact information is as follows:

- Website: <https://uh.edu/education/student-services/certifications/>
- Email: uhcert@central.uh.edu
- Phone: (713) 743-2485

Appendix-Forms

Note: A standalone PDF of this log can be accessed [here](#).

Superintendency Practicum Activity Log

During each of their fourth, fifth, and sixth semesters in the program, students must maintain a log of their field-based activities related to district-based leadership activities. Each entry must contain the date, activity name/description, hours, and reference to the Superintendent Certificate Standards. Logs should include the activities related to the superintendent's role (i.e. *not* campus leadership).

A total of 160 hours is required for certification. The student is responsible for maintaining and submitting signed logs to the Program Director at the end of each of their fourth, fifth, and sixth semesters.

I certify that the information submitted is accurate and complete.

Student name (printed): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the intern has completed all of the listed activities.

Site Supervisor name (printed): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the intern has completed all of the listed activities.

Program Director name (printed): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Field Supervisor Observation Protocol

Note: A standalone PDF of this protocol can be accessed [here](#).

<p>Pre-Conference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards-based • Promotes self-assessment and self-reflection • Supports a logical progression of proficiency • Informs goal-setting and professional development 	<p>Date:</p> <hr/> <p>Notes:</p>
<p>Observation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe expectations in standards and best practices • Gather evidence • Assess implementation and impact • Prioritize practices • Generate questions to reinforce and refine practices • *It is recommended that the observation be for a total of 45 minutes 	<p>Date:</p> <hr/> <p>Total number of meeting minutes:</p> <hr/> <p>Notes:</p>
<p>Post-Conference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toward expectations outlined in the standards • To foster support, growth, and development that is intentional • To develop knowledge, skills, behaviors, and actions that are high impact 	<p>Date:</p> <hr/> <p>Notes:</p>

*While it is recommended that each individual observation be for a total of 45 minutes, the three separate observations must total 135 minutes. *TAC 228 (h)(1) "Formal observations must be at least 135 minutes in duration in total throughout the practicum and must be conducted by a field supervisor."*

A Carnegie-designated Tier One public research university

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Please rate the candidate's proficiency with Texas's [Superintendent Certificate Standards](#).

	Unsatisfactory	Approaches	Proficient	Exceeds	Not Observed
b: Learner-Centered Values and Ethics of Leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c: Learner-Centered Leadership and School District Culture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d: Learner-Centered Human Resources Leadership and Management.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e: Learner-Centered Policy and Governance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f: Learner-Centered Communications and Community Relations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g: Learner-Centered Organizational Leadership and Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h: Learner-Centered Curriculum Planning and Development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i: Learner-Centered Instructional Leadership and Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Student Name: _____

Date of initial contact with student: _____

I recommend this candidate for certification (*for final field observations only*): _____YES _____NO

Medium of observation: _____face-to-face _____virtual

Field Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

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