



A Legislative Summary Document Regarding State Board for Educator Certification

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The State Board for Educator Certification (Board) can improve the efficiency and quality of services in its core processes. This includes reducing activities in the educator certification process that do not add value, conducting federal criminal background checks for certification applicants, improving the payment review process for the Board's testing contractor, and strengthening complaint notification and tracking processes.

Prepared for the 78th Legislature
by the State Auditor's Office

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This is not an audit report and, with the exception of any audit report summaries, the material in this document has not been subjected to all of the tests and confirmations performed in an audit.

State Board for Educator Certification

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Key Findings from Previous Audits and Reviews

January 1, 2001–December 31, 2002

Ongoing Audit of 10 Agencies' Compliance With Historically Underutilized Business Requirements

The State Auditor's Office will release a report in February 2003 regarding the State Board for Educator Certification's compliance with Historically Underutilized Business requirements.

An Audit of Small Agency Internal Control and Financial Processes

(Report No. 02-016, December 2001)

The State Board for Educator Certification (Board) can improve the efficiency and quality of services in its core processes. Specifically, the Board should:

- Reduce activities in the educator certification process that do not add value. These activities cost up to \$321,000 annually and add up to 20 days to the time required to process a certification. Included within these activities is the Board's electronic scanning process, which could be eliminated to improve efficiency. There also are opportunities to improve efficiencies in telephone support and data entry.
- Consider conducting federal criminal background checks for certification applicants. The Board's current background checks do not ensure that the criminal histories of applicants who committed offenses outside of Texas will be detected during the certification process. Twenty-seven other states require Federal Bureau of Investigation criminal background checks.
- Improve the payment review process for the Board's testing contractor to ensure that the contractor has completed all testing activity before payment is made. Payments to this contractor represent nearly one-third of the Board's annual expenditures.
- Strengthen complaint notification and tracking processes to ensure that the Board is adequately notifying complainants about complaint dispositions and monitoring the status of complaint investigations.

Status of Audit Recommendations¹ as of November 30, 2002 (unaudited)	
The Board has reported the following:	
Implemented	2
Partially implemented	4
Factors delay implementation	1
Total recommendations	7
¹ From management letter No. 02-314	

An Audit Report on State Entity Compliance With Benefits Proportional by Fund Requirements

(Report No. 02-069, August 2002)

According to the Comptroller, two state agencies—the Texas Forest Service and the State Board for Educator Certification—did not comply with the requirement to submit *Benefits Proportional by Fund Reports* for fiscal year 2001. In addition, neither agency submitted its report to the State Auditor's Office.

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Most Recent Performance Measure Certification

Fiscal Year 1998–Fiscal Year 2003

The results of *An Audit on Performance Measures at 11 State Agencies–Phase 13* (Report No. 00-030, May 2000) for this entity are summarized below.

Period	Goal/Strategy	Measure	Certification Results	
1999	A	Board for Educator Certification	Percent of documented complaints resolved within six months	Inaccurate
1999	A	Board for Educator Certification	Percent of teachers who are certified	Certified with Qualification
1999	A	Board for Educator Certification	Percent of employed teachers who are assigned to the positions for which they are certified	Factors Prevented Certification
1999	A.1.1	Educator Certification/ Development	Individuals certified through alternative certification programs	Factors Prevented Certification
1999	A.1.1	Educator Certification/ Development	Average cost per certificate issued	Inaccurate
Total Measures Certified Without Qualification^a			0/5 (0%)	
Data Reliability Percentage (Certified and Certified with Qualification)			1/5 (20%)	

^a The percentage of unqualified certifications is presented because it is used in determining an entity's eligibility for performance rewards as established in the General Appropriations Act [77th Legislature, Article IX, Sec. 6.31(d)(2)].

Category	Definition
Certified	Reported performance is accurate within +/-5 percent, and controls appear adequate to ensure accurate collection and reporting of performance data.
Certified with Qualification	Reported performance is within +/-5 percent, but the controls over data collection and reporting are not adequate to ensure the continued accuracy of performance data.
Factors Prevented Certification	Actual performance cannot be determined because of inadequate controls and insufficient documentation.
Inaccurate	Reported performance is not within +/-5 percent of actual performance, or there is an error rate of at least 5 percent in the supporting documentation.
Not Applicable	A justifiable reason exists for not reporting performance.

Quality Assurance Team Reviews

Conducted by the Legislative Budget Board and State Auditor's Office

Ongoing Projects

Quality Assurance Team Annual Report – January 2003

Integrated Technology System (ITS) — In March 1995, the State Board for Educator Certification began to develop a Web-enabled system to maintain teacher certification data from service providers. The time line continues to slip. Current expenditures are \$5,583,589.

Project	Function	Initial Budget	Current Budget	Budget Change	Initial End Date	Current End Date	Time Change
ITS	Maintain certification data	\$7,308,593	\$6,242,895	(\$1,065,698)	08/31/99	08/31/03	48 months

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Travel Expenditures

Travel Expenditures by Appropriation Year (unaudited)			
	2000	2001	2002
In-State Travel	\$ 57,315	\$ 62,747	\$ 54,799
Out-of-State Travel	21,676	14,796	9,369
Foreign Travel	0	0	0
Other Travel Costs	(192)	0	16
Total Travel Expenditures	\$ 78,799	\$ 77,542	\$ 64,184
Limit on Travel Expenditures (Cap)	114,252	114,252	21,676 ^a
Expenditures in Excess of Cap	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0

^a Caps apply to total travel in appropriation years 2000 and 2001, but caps apply only to out-of-state travel and foreign travel in appropriation year 2002. Caps, calculated by the Comptroller of Public Accounts, have been adjusted for any increases requested by the Board and approved by the Legislative Budget Board in accordance with the General Appropriations Act.

Source: Uniform Statewide Accounting System (USAS) as of November 30, 2002. Amounts are subject to change as agencies continue to record additional expenditures or adjustments.