

**North Carolina Department of Public Instruction  
and the  
Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation  
Partnership Agreement**

In order to promote excellence in educator preparation by coordinating North Carolina State Board of Education approval and national accreditation reviews of Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs), the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) enter into this partnership agreement. The agreement describes the partnership and delineates the processes and policies for CAEP accreditation in North Carolina.

**I. Standards for National Accreditation of Educator Preparation Providers**

- A. CAEP educator preparation provider standards must be met on the basis of sufficient and accurate evidence to merit national accreditation by CAEP.
- B. North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards (NCPTS) and institutional standards shall be applied in the CAEP accreditation process.

**II. Process of National Accreditation for Educator Preparation Providers**

- A. The process required for national accreditation by CAEP is outlined in CAEP Policies. EPPs seeking CAEP Accreditation must satisfy eligibility requirements, submit a self-study in a CAEP-approved format for formative feedback through off-site review, facilitate the posting of a call for public comment and distribution of third-party surveys to stakeholders, host a site visit, and complete an approved program review process for all programs leading to educator licensing.
- B. Terms of accreditation shall be for seven (7) years. Accreditation status is subject to CAEP policies, including annual payment of dues and submission of an annual report. EPPs pay an annual fee to CAEP based upon their number of completers.
- C. An EPP must choose from one of three pathways for accreditation offered by CAEP: Selective Improvement (SI), Inquiry Brief (IB), or Transformational Initiative (TI). An EPP shall have the choice of pathway for each 7-year accreditation cycle. The EPP is responsible for communicating the desired pathway to NCDPI through the state CAEP consultant, a contract employee for NCDPI.

**III. Standards and Processes for Program Review**

- A. For purposes of ongoing state program approval, the EPP will be reviewed through the state program approval process as determined by NCDPI and approved by the North Carolina State Board of

Education (NCSBE), and as further set forth in SBE Policies TCP-B-003 and TCP-B-004. Accordingly, NCDPI recognizes the following program review option:

1. State Review by State Authority

The NC Department of Public Instruction, Educator Preparation, facilitates a review and approval process for each education program leading to an educator degree and/or licensure for approval by the State Board of Education (State Authority) and to inform CAEP accreditation.

See <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/ihe/remodeling/> for more information on the Educator Preparation Program Approval Process.

- B. As evidence of quality, CAEP accepts the decisions of national accrediting organizations for specialized professional program areas recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. Proper documentation of current accreditation must be presented. North Carolina EPPs are not required to engage in national recognition by the Specialized Professional Association (SPA) process, but are not prohibited from seeking recognition from the SPAs. National recognition by the SPAs is not associated with the state program approval process.

#### **IV. Accreditation Review Team Composition**

- A. The CAEP Accreditation Review Team is appointed by CAEP and accompanied by the DPI CAEP state consultant who serves as a non-writing, non-voting member of the team. The state consultant shall explain the state program approval process, answer questions for the team and shall be present and participate in the offsite review, the pre-visit and the onsite visit.
- B. The following conditions shall apply:
1. All members of Review Teams must have successfully completed CAEP Review Team Member training.
  2. A P-12 practitioner shall be a member of the CAEP team whenever possible.
  3. The state teachers' association (NCAE) may appoint an observer for the onsite review at the association's expense.
  4. The EPP will be responsible for assuming all CAEP accreditation expenses-including travel, lodging and meals for site team members and the evaluation fee. NCDPI shall not be responsible for paying said expenses on behalf of the EPP.
  5. Onsite team activities will be conducted according to CAEP policy.
  6. NCDPI will pay the state DPI CAEP consultant's expenses for all costs associated with the CAEP accreditation process.
  7. The CAEP site-visit report will be shared with CAEP state contacts and other NCDPI officials (CAEP Dec 2014 Policy Manual, page 17, Section 2, Policy XXI).

8. The state program approval process shall be explicitly defined and shall be available on the NCDPI website. The state's DPI CAEP consultant shall be responsible for ensuring the visiting team's understanding of the state program approval process.

**V. Other terms and Conditions**

- A. The CAEP shall collaborate with the NCDPI to plan, design and implement a range of training opportunities. As part of this agreement, state representatives supporting the accreditation process may participate in all web training, on-site conferences and training. One state representative may attend CAEP conferences with free registration, with the NCDPI assuming other approved expenses. CAEP will assume all expenses for one DPI state authority representative to attend the annual CAEP Clinic, with additional representatives welcome at their own expense. Additional training events may be arranged, including events in the state, with arrangements negotiated according to CAEP's policies regarding fees and expenses for training.
- B. The NCDPI shall receive copies of all pertinent accreditation and specialized program area approval documents and reports through access to the Accreditation Information Management System (AIMS); agency personnel shall be supplied with login information, passwords, and technical support.
- C. The NCDPI shall notify CAEP within thirty days of action taken when a CAEP accredited educator preparation provider has had a "Change in State Status" as a result of a decision on specialized professional program status by the state authority for educator preparation or for other reasons pertaining to state policy or regulation.
- D. EPPs that are seeking CAEP accreditation or hold CAEP accreditation status shall be responsible for paying annual CAEP dues. NCDPI shall not be responsible for paying said dues on behalf of EPPs.
- E. The state authority will be responsible for annual CAEP membership dues for the state (NCDPI).
- F. Final accreditation decisions are posted on CAEP's website. CAEP shall send the State School Superintendent of North Carolina a letter with the official accreditation decision. Additionally, CAEP provides written notice of all accreditation decisions to the U.S. Dept. of Education, the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agency, all accrediting agencies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and the public (via the CAEP website).
- G. This partnership agreement shall be for an initial period of five years beginning July 1, 2016 and ending on June 30, 2021 and may be modified only upon written agreement of both Parties. The Parties may mutually agree to terminate this partnership agreement at any

time. Either Party may terminate this partnership agreement with at least sixty (60) days prior written notice to the other party.

- H. The state shall establish credit toward continuing education units in return for the state's P-12 educators' professional contributions to the work of CAEP as visiting team members or program reviewers.
- I. For the purposes of this agreement, "program" is defined as licensure area and "EPP" refers to the unit as a whole.
- J. The terms of this agreement have been reached by mutual consent and have been read and understood by the persons whose signatures appear below. The parties agree to comply with the terms and conditions of the plan as set forth herein.

Christopher Koch, President  
Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation

Dr. June St. Clair Atkinson  
State Superintendent  
Public Schools of North Carolina