

**Partnership Agreement
between
The Alabama State Department of Education
and
The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation**

To promote excellence in educator preparation by coordinating state program approval and national accreditation reviews of Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs) and to eliminate duplication of effort and reporting, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) enter into this partnership agreement. The agreement describes the partnership and delineates the processes and policies for CAEP accreditation in Alabama.

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. All state standards adopted by the Alabama State Board of Education in the Teacher Education Chapter of the *Alabama Administrative Code*, Rule 290-3-3, must be met.
- C. Standards particular to the EPP may also 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. The 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 of study leading to professional practice in a school setting.
- B. For EPPs seeking continuing accreditation, the terms of accreditation shall be for a maximum of seven years. If an EPP is accredited for the first time, initial accreditation will be for up to five years. EPP accreditation status is subject to CAEP policies, including annual payment of dues and submission of an annual report as required.

- C. An EPP must choose from one of three pathways for accreditation pathways offered by CAEP: Continuous Improvement (CI), Inquiry Brief (IB), or Transformational Initiative (TI). An EPP will have the choice of pathway for each accreditation report submitted and may change its pathway after successful completion of an accreditation cycle. The EPP is responsible for communicating the desired pathway with CAEP and the ALSDE teacher education advisor. Changes in an EPP's chosen pathway during an accreditation cycle require the EPP to consult with the ALSDE and CAEP.

III. Standards and Processes for Program Review

- A. The Alabama State Board of Education has sole responsibility for program approval. The Alabama State Superintendent of Education will utilize information generated from the selected program review option(s) in III.D. to determine whether to recommend approval of the Alabama State Board of Education.
- B. For purposes of program approval, all Alabama initial teaching field programs (Class B and Alternative Class A programs) must submit documentation for the Alabama Quality Teaching Standards (AQTS) or other professional studies standards adopted by the Alabama State Board of Education.
- C. An educator preparation provider (EPP) may choose from among any of the four program review options listed in III.D. The EPPs will submit program reports following the submission guidelines and timelines established for each option by the entity conducting the review.
- D. For standards specific to a teaching field or area of instructional support (e.g., instructional leadership, school counseling), EPPs may choose from among the following review options for each program and may choose different options for different programs:
 - 1. State Review by the Alabama State Department of Education:**
ALSDE conducts program reviews for purposes of preparing recommendations for approval by the Alabama State Board of Education and to inform CAEP accreditation. The ALSDE provides forms and instructions on how to meet all standards adopted by the ALSDE for issuance of a Professional Education Certificate based on completion of an approved program. Submissions are due at least 18 months prior to the site visit.
 - 2. CAEP Program Review with National Recognition:**
CAEP Program Review with National Recognition applies Specialized Professional Association (SPA) standards in the SPA review process and may result in national recognition. Individual SPAs determine submission

guidelines and policies. Only currently approved programs in EPPs accredited by CAEP may use this option. EPPs must submit the accreditation letter and program report to the ALSDE to use this option.

3. Program Review by Other National Teaching-Field Specific Accrediting Agencies:

The Alabama State Superintendent of Education will consider the program review report and letter from other national teaching-field specific accrediting agencies other than those affiliated with CAEP (ex., CACREP or NASM). Any currently approved program in Alabama may use this option. EPPs must submit the accreditation letter and program report to the ALSDE to use this option.

4. CAEP Program Review with Feedback:

~~CAEP Program Review with Feedback provides information to educator preparation providers, the ALSDE, and accreditation teams. Program clusters will be reviewed by trained CAEP reviewers. Only currently approved programs in EPPs accredited by CAEP may use this option. CAEP determines submission guidelines and policies. EPPs must submit the program review report to the ALSDE to use this option.~~ CK

IV. Review Teams

- A. Joint teams of members appointed by CAEP and the Alabama State Superintendent of Education conduct reviews. All members of the joint review team must have successfully completed CAEP training. CAEP-appointed members make up more than 50% of the team.
- B. The review team is led by the team chair, appointed by CAEP, and the state chair, typically the ALSDE staff member assigned to the EPP. The state chair participates in the offsite visit, the pre-visit, and the onsite visit. The state chair also provides the review team information about Alabama's rules for educator preparation. The state chair participates in interviews and deliberations. An ALSDE staff member serving as state chair does not write any part of the offsite or onsite reports and does not vote but may assist in gathering evidence and editing the draft reports.
- C. The CAEP and the ALSDE will make every effort to assign a P-12 teacher to the team.
- D. The Alabama Education Association (AEA) may appoint an observer for the onsite review. The AEA is responsible for all costs for the observer. The ALSDE staff member assigned to the EPP will notify AEA of upcoming onsite reviews.

- E. Other observers may be present. Arrangements must be agreed upon in advance by the EPP, team chair, and ALSDE staff member. There must be no conflict of interest. Observers may not participate in discussions and may, depending on circumstances, be excluded from some team meetings at the discretion of the team chair. The observer is responsible for all costs.
- F. All team activities will be conducted according to CAEP policies.
- G. To assure educator preparation providers and the public that CAEP reviews are impartial and objective, to avoid conflicts of interest, and to promote equity and high ethical standards in the accreditation system, review team members will adhere to CAEP's Code of Conduct.

V. Logistics and Expenses

- A. The EPP will work with the assigned ALSDE staff member to determine preferred visit dates at least one year prior to the onsite visit. Dates must be cleared with the ALSDE prior to submission of the self-study report to CAEP. The CAEP will consult with the ALSDE regarding any requests from EPPs for delays in reviews.
- B. The EPP may choose to host an on-campus pre-visit with the team chair and ALSDE staff member. The institution is responsible for all costs and will reimburse the team chair directly.
- C. The EPP is responsible for the expenses of all members of the review team (including travel, lodging, and meals) appointed by CAEP or ALSDE, including the ALSDE staff member.
- D. The EPP is responsible for the CAEP per-visitor fee only for CAEP-assigned team members, not state-assigned team members.
- E. Alabama EPPs that are seeking CAEP accreditation or hold CAEP accreditation status will pay annual CAEP dues.
- F. The ALSDE is responsible for Alabama's annual CAEP membership fee.

VI. Other Terms and Conditions

- A. The CAEP will collaborate with the ALSDE to plan, design, and implement a range of training opportunities for reviewers. As part of this agreement, ALSDE staff members may participate in all Web training, onsite conferences, and training for no registration fee.
- B. Additional training events may be arranged, including events in Alabama, on a cost-recovery basis with arrangements negotiated according to CAEP's policies regarding fees and expenses for training.
- C. The CAEP will pay all expenses (i.e., travel, hotel, food) for one ALSDE staff member to attend the annual CAEP Clinic.
- D. The CAEP will waive the registration fee for an ALSDE staff member to attend one annual CAEP Conference. The CAEP is not responsible for any other expenses for the annual conference. The CAEP welcomes attendance by other ALSDE staff members but does not provide funding.
- E. The ALSDE will receive copies of all pertinent accreditation and specialized program area approval documents and reports.
- F. The ALSDE will provide to CAEP its policy leading to a change in program approval status of any programs.
 - a. Information in the current Teacher Education Chapter of the *Alabama Administrative Code* related to program approval and rescission is available on the ALSDE Web See Rule 290-3-3-.56(2) on page 400.46 of the document.
 - b. Information on the new program review process, Continuous Improvement in Educator Preparation (CIEP) is available on the ALSDE Web site, see information about approval options on pages 2 and 3.
 - c. The ALSDE will 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 related to program approval by the Alabama State Board of Education.
- G. Responses to the final reports by the EPP will follow procedures and timelines established in CAEP policy.

- H. Final accreditation decisions are posted on CAEP's Web site. The CAEP sends the Alabama State Superintendent of Education a letter with the official accreditation decision. Additionally, the CAEP provides written notice of all accreditation decisions to the U.S. Department of Education, all accrediting agencies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and the public (via the CAEP Web site).
- I. The ALSDE will provide documentation of service on a review team or as a program reviewer which may be used to document professional development activity for renewing an Alabama Professional Educator Certificate or Alabama Professional Leadership Certificate in accordance with Alabama regulations.
- J. The partnership agreement shall be for an initial period of seven years (March 1, 2014 through December 31, 2021) and may be modified by the two parties during that time, if deemed necessary. The intent of this partnership agreement is to outline the working relationship between CAEP and ALSDE.
- K. 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.



Thomas R. Bice, State Superintendent of Education
Alabama State Department of Education

DATE:



Christopher A. Koch, Interim President
Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation

DATE: September 21, 2015