

**The Arkansas Department of Education, the Arkansas Department of Higher Education  
and  
The Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation  
Partnership Agreement**

In order to promote excellence in educator preparation by coordinating state 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), the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) and the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) enter into this partnership agreement. The agreement describes the partnership and delineates the processes and policies for CAEP accreditation in Arkansas.

**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. State standards also 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 an 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. Term of accreditation shall be for seven (7) years. EPP accreditation is subject to CAEP policies, including payment of annual dues and submission of reports as required.
- C. EPPs may select any of CAEP's designated pathways for their accreditation reviews – Continuous Improvement (CI), Transformational Initiative (TI) or Inquiry Brief (IB).

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

- A. The EPP may choose from among the three program review options listed below in III.D. EPPs will submit program reports following the instructions for the selected program review process.
- B. The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) has the responsibility for approval of individual programs of study for educator licensure. The ADE will utilize information generated from the three review options to make decisions regarding state program approval. Program approval decisions must be made by the ADE within 12 months of

first submission of reports through any of the program review options. Arkansas public colleges and universities also must receive approval for program implementation from the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB).

- C. As evidence of quality, CAEP, ADE and ADHE accept the decisions of national accrediting organizations for specialized professional program areas that are recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. The programs also must comply with any state rules and licensure requirements that may apply. Proper documentation of current program accreditation must be presented by the EPP.
- D. For purposes of continued state program approval, the State of Arkansas recognizes the following program review options:

**1. CAEP Program Review with National Recognition:**

CAEP Program Review with National Recognition applies Specialized Professional Association (SPA) standards in the SPA review process and can result in National Recognition. The ADE will review the program review report and will make a decision regarding continued state approval.

**2. CAEP Program Review with Feedback:**

CAEP Program Review with Feedback provides information to educator preparation providers, states and accreditation teams. Program clusters are reviewed by trained CAEP reviewers. The Arkansas Teaching Standards (InTASC) serve as the foundation for the review of teachers and other school professionals with some exceptions. The ADE reviews the CAEP Feedback Report and makes a decision regarding continued state approval for each program included in the review.

**3. State Review by the Arkansas Department of Education:**

The ADE and ADHE conduct reviews of non-traditional licensure programs (e.g., MAT, MEd, MTLL) for purposes of continuing state approval and to inform CAEP accreditation reviews. The non-traditional licensure programs provide pedagogy training for those candidates with a bachelor degree or higher. Content preparation is verified by a passing score on the appropriate content-area assessment for licensure. The ADE provides forms and instructions for state program reviews. Upon receipt of the program report(s), the ADE assigns trained reviewers to review the

programs and make recommendations for further action and/or approval. The ADE makes the final decision regarding continued state approval.

EPPs may choose from among the reporting options listed above for each licensure program, and may choose different options for different programs.

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

- A. The accreditation review team is appointed by CAEP.
- B. The ADE designates a state consultant, who will participate in all activities of the accreditation review process as a non-voting member of the accreditation review team at the agency's expense. The state consultant advises the accreditation review team regarding state policies and participates in team activities (data collection, interviews, discussions), but does not have any report writing responsibilities.
- C. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) appoints to the accreditation review team a representative, who serves as the agency's official contact during the accreditation process and participates in the onsite visit as an observer at the agency's expense. The ADE notifies the ADHE of all upcoming accreditation reviews to be conducted at Arkansas EPPs.
- D. The following conditions apply to the accreditation review teams:
  - 1. All members of the accreditation review team must have successfully completed CAEP Review Team training.
  - 2. Each accreditation review team shall include a P-12 practitioner.
  - 3. The Arkansas Education Association (AEA) may appoint an observer for the onsite review at the association's expense.
  - 4. The EPP will assume all expenses – including travel, lodging and meals – for the CAEP site visit team, as well as the periodic evaluation fee.
  - 5. Offsite and onsite team activities will be conducted according to CAEP policy.
  - 6. The CAEP team report, with supporting data and evidence, will be shared among CAEP, ADE and ADHE.
  - 7. 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, accreditation review team members, consultants and observers will adhere to CAEP's Code of Conduct.

#### **V. Other Terms and Conditions**

- A. CAEP will collaborate with the state authority to plan, design and implement a range of training opportunities for reviewers. As part of this agreement, state agency representatives may participate in all web training, onsite conferences, and training for no registration fee, but must assume all other expenses. CAEP will assume all expenses for one state agency representative to attend the annual CAEP clinic, with additional representatives welcome to attend at their own expense. Additional training events may be arranged, including events in the state, on a cost-recovery basis with arrangements negotiated according to CAEP's policies regarding fees and training expenses.
- B. The ADE and ADHE will have access to copies of all pertinent accreditation and specialized program area approval documents and reports through CAEP's Accreditation Information Management System (AIMS). Agency personnel will be supplied with logon information, passwords and technical support.
- C. The ADE will provide to CAEP its policy leading to a "Change in State Status." The ADE will notify CAEP within 30 days of action taken when a CAEP accredited EPP has had a "Change in State Status" as a result of a decision by the ADE regarding a specialized professional program.
- D. Responses to the final reports by the EPP and/or the ADE will follow procedures and timelines established in CAEP policy.
- E. EPPs that are seeking CAEP accreditation or hold CAEP accreditation will pay annual CAEP dues. The state authority will be responsible for its CAEP membership dues.
- F. Final accreditation decisions are posted on CAEP's website. CAEP sends the Executive Director of the ADE a letter with the official accreditation decision. Additionally, CAEP provides written notice of all accreditation decisions to the U.S. Department of Education, the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agency, all accrediting agencies recognized by the USDE, CHEA and the public (via the CAEP website).
- G. The state will work with associations that represent P-12 educators (NEA, AFT, NBPTS), education preparation providers, and education administrators to establish credit toward continuing education units or professional development requirements at the local district

level in return for P-12 educators contributions to the accreditation process as visiting team members or program reviewers.

H. This partnership agreement shall be for a period of seven years – July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2021 – and may be modified by the named parties during that time if deemed to be necessary.

I. 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.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tom Kimbrell, Commissioner  
Arkansas Department of Education

5-13-14  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Shane Broadway, Director  
Arkansas Department of Higher Education

4-29-14  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
James G. Cibulka, President  
Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation

6/13/14  
Date