

## Proposed Arkansas Department of Education Policies Governing Educator Preparation Program Approval

### Summary

**Purpose:** The proposed changes to the Arkansas Department of Education Policies for Educator Preparation Program Approval are made:

- To reflect recent amendments to the Rules Governing Educator Licensure and remove provisions duplicated in those rules;
- To comply with legislative intent;
- To reflect the transition of accreditation from National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) to the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP);
- To provide a clear basis for the statutorily required audits of educator preparation programs under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-422;
- To remove unnecessary barriers and allow institutions of higher education to innovate and update programs to meet current needs for teachers and students in Arkansas public schools; and
- To make technical corrections to the rule.

#### **Highlights of the revisions include:**

- The name of the rule is changed to a shorter name that reflects the statutory basis for the policies.
- Language has been revised throughout the rule to transition from NCATE accreditation terminology to CAEP accreditation terminology.
- **Section 4.02** adds “national” accrediting agency, which will allow the institution of higher education to be regionally OR nationally accredited.

*Rationale: Acts 292, 865, and 1090 indicated that it is the intent of the legislature that institutions be allowed to be nationally or regionally accredited.*

- **Sections 5.01.2 and 5.01.3** were deleted and incorporated in a new **Section 9.0**.
- **Section 6.03** and its subdivisions are deleted to remove Specialized Professional Association accreditation as a substitute for state approval. This deletion also removes a provision for placing a program on inactive status, as CAEP accreditation will control this.
- **Section 6.04** is added due to the deletion of old Sections 8.0 and 10.0.

- **Sections 7.02, 7.03, 7.04, and 7.06** remove the number of semester hours and instead program approval will be determined by an analysis of how the program prepares candidates for the competencies expected. Section 7.04

*Rationale: Having a designated number of semester hours or “seat time” does not necessarily ensure quality. This will give programs flexibility for course and program design, but programs will be held accountable for meeting state-approved standards.*

- **Section 7.05** is added to cover the licensure areas of library media specialist, reading specialist, and guidance and school counselors, as these areas were previously inadvertently omitted from these policies. The Specialized Professional Association that provides national recognition for these programs allows each state to determine whether a master’s degree is required. Therefore, Arkansas has included that requirement.
- **Section 7.06** (see above)
- **Section 7.07** is amended because these standards have recently undergone revision and new leadership standards will be submitted for State Board approval soon, but not before these rules are submitted for public comment.
- **Section 7.08.1.4** is added to cover the 4-12 licensure area, previously inadvertently omitted.
- **Section 7.08.3** is added to place the provisions of old Section 7.08.8 in a more appropriate place in the policies; therefore, old Section 7.08.8 is deleted.
- **Section 7.09** clarifies that this provision relates to recommending candidates for licensure, not identifying them as “completers”, as that is a term of art for Title II and other purposes.
- **Section 8.05** removes the number of semester hours and instead program approval will be determined by an analysis of how the program prepares candidates for the competencies expected. Having a designated number of clock hours does not always ensure quality. This will give programs flexibility for course design, but will ensure that candidates will have quality preparation.
- **Old Sections 8.0 and 10.0** have been removed. They were specifically for candidates and are included in the *ADE Rules Governing Educator Licensure*. These policies should focus on the education preparation programs and be usable as the basis for audit criteria.
- **Old Section 11.0** regarding program accountability is also removed as it is not needed during the transition to CAEP. In addition, new audit procedures are being developed for compliance with statutory audit requirements.
- **New Section 9.0** is added to accurately reflect the current accountability provisions for educator preparation program approval by the ADE and PLSB. The provisions reflect what will happen when approval or accreditation is discontinued. It also reflects the changes in audit provisions in Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-422 (Act 1090). New provisions were included for a State Board hearing process when an institution of higher education challenges a PLSB recommendation to the State Board for removal of authority to offer a program.