

Nebraska Department of Education  
and  
The Council for the 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 Programs (EPPs), and to eliminate duplication of effort and reporting, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) enter into this partnership agreement. The agreement describes the partnership and delineates the processes and policies for CAEP accreditation in Nebraska.

- 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. Nebraska state standards and institutional standards may 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 of study leading to professional practice in a school setting.
  - B. Terms of accreditation shall be for seven (7) years. EPP accreditation status is subject to CAEP policies, including annual payment of fees, and submission of an annual report as required.
  - C. Nebraska EPPs must choose from one of three 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 to CAEP and NDE. Changes in an EPP's chosen pathway during an accreditation cycle requires the EPP to consult with CAEP and NDE.
- III. Standards and Processes for Program Review
  - A. The educator preparation provider may choose from among any of the three program review options listed in III.D below that have been approved by Nebraska in this partnership agreement. EPPs will submit program reports following the instructions for the program review process.
  - B. NDE has sole responsibility for program approval. NDE will utilize information generated from the three program review options to make decisions regarding Nebraska program approval.
  - C. As evidence of quality, CAEP accepts the decisions of national accrediting organizations for specialized professional program areas that are recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (USED) or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). Proper documentation of current accreditation must be presented by the EPP.
  - D. For purposes of state program approval, NDE recognizes the following program review options:
    1. CAEP Program Review with National Recognition:  
CAEP program review with national recognition applies specialized professional associations' (SPA) standards and can result in national recognition

by individual SPAs. NDE will review the program review report and will make a decision on continued state approval.

*See: Websites of CAEP and of particular SPAs for more information.*

2. CAEP Program Review with Feedback:

CAEP program review with provides information to educator preparation providers, states, and accreditation teams. NDE will assist CAEP in identifying reviewers to participate in training and review activities. NDE will review the feedback report and will make a decision on continued state approval. Program clusters will be reviewed by trained CAEP reviewers.

*See: [www.caepnet.org](http://www.caepnet.org) for more information.*

3. State Review by NDE:

NDE conducts program reviews for purposes of state approval and to inform CAEP accreditation. NDE provides forms and instructions on how to meet all state standards for licensure/certificate program approval. Upon completion of the NDE forms, trained reviewers are selected and assigned within appropriate content areas. Reviewers make recommendations for further action and/or approval. The Nebraska State Board of Education makes the final decision on approval of all programs.

*See (<http://www.education.ne.gov/EducatorPrep/TopPages/ForiHE.html#PA>) for more information on the state review process.*

EPPs will choose from among these review options for each endorsement program and may choose different options for different programs.

#### IV. Accreditation Review Team Composition

The Accreditation Review Team is appointed by CAEP according to the guidelines and policies for the selected accreditation pathway. The state will conduct a joint visit with state members selected to serve on the accreditation team with CAEP selected members.

The following conditions apply to the CAEP-NDE site visit teams:

- All CAEP team members must have successfully completed CAEP Review Team Member training. All state team members will have successfully completed CAEP Review Team Member training or a state training conducted in collaboration with CAEP.
- A NDE Representative shall be a member of each CAEP team and will serve as a team member and state consultant.
- A P-12 practitioner shall be a member of each CAEP team.
- The Nebraska State Education Association (NSEA) may appoint an observer for the onsite review at the associations' expense. If the NSEA representative has successfully completed CAEP/State Review Team Member training, the individual may participate in all activities of the review team and will be considered as part of the state team.
- The EPP will assume all expenses- including travel, lodging and meals- for CAEP and state team members, as well as the periodic evaluation fee. Onsiteteam activities will be conducted according to CAEP policies.
- The CAEP team report will be shared with the NDE.
- In order to assure EPPs 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 will adhere to CAEP's Code of Conduct.

#### V. Other Terms and Conditions

- A. CAEP will collaborate with NDE to plan, design and implement a range of training opportunities for reviewers. As part of this agreement, state representatives may participate in all web training, onsite conferences, and training for no registration fee, but must assume other expenses. The registration fee for one NDE representative will be waived for one annual CAEP Conference, but other expenses are the responsibility of the representative. CAEP will assume all expenses for a NDE 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, on a cost-recovery basis with arrangements negotiated according to CAEP's policies regarding fees and expenses for training.
- B. NDE will 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 will be supplied with login information, passwords, and technical support.
- C. NDE will provide notice to CAEP within 30 days of action taken when a CAEP accredited educator preparation provider has had a "Change in State Status" as a result of a specialized professional program decision by the NDE.
- D. Responses to the final reports by the EPP and/or NDE will follow procedures and timelines established in CAEP policy.
- E. Nebraska EPPs seeking CAEP accreditation or holding CAEP accreditation will pay annual CAEP dues and will pursue initial or continuing accreditation in accordance with CAEP policies, procedures, timelines and terms.
- F. NDE will be responsible for annual CAEP state partnership membership dues which will be billed on an annual July 1-June 30 basis. Final accreditation decisions are posted on CAEP's website. CAEP sends the Executive Director of the Nebraska Commissioner of Education a letter with the official accreditation decision, with a copy sent to the Administrator for Nebraska Educator Preparation Program Approval. 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 U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, and the public (via the CAEP website).
- G. The partnership agreement shall be for an initial period of seven years (January 1, 2015-December 31, 2022) and may be modified by the two parties during that time. Either party may cancel the agreement at any time with no financial obligation other than the cost of the current annual CAEP state partnership membership dues to the organization that have been invoiced and paid separately from this agreement.
- H. 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.

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

DATE

Dr. Matt Blomstedt, Commissioner  
 Nebraska Department of Education

DATE