
Educator Preparation Policy

The Background:

Educator preparation programs are designed to ensure that prospective educators are prepared to meet minimum standards of practice upon completion of a program of study. The department's role in supporting this effort is to facilitate the review of the quality and effectiveness of educator preparation providers (EPPs) and specialty area programs (SAPs) they offer. The board's role is to issue approval or denial for EPPs and SAPs based on assessment of the recommendations that result from the review process.

The current review process is cumbersome and too focused on inputs without adequate attention to outcomes of recruitment and selection strategies, nature of the clinical partnerships, and impact of program completers. In the past, two national organizations, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) were approved to review educator preparation providers for the purpose of national accreditation. Tennessee has been an engaged partner with NCATE since 1989. In July 2013, NCATE and TEAC merged to form a new accrediting agency, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). CAEP convened a board of experts to develop a new set of standards that are substantially more focused on EPP outcomes and impact. Over the past year, the Department of Education has engaged Tennessee stakeholders in order to consider what changes should be made to review process for educator preparation providers and programs.

The proposed item offers a new approach to the approval of educator preparation providers that maintains those aspects of our process that continue to be relevant and useful, while incorporating the new CAEP standards and adopting processes for the ongoing approval of specialty area programs based on annual reporting processes.

The Recommendation:

The Department of Education recommends acceptance of this item on first reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.