

## **Pathways to Accreditation Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)**

The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) will accomplish its work through the familiar means of self-study, onsite visit, and peer review. A fundamental principle of this unified system of accreditation is the availability of choice in the accreditation process and self-study to provide a more productive match between the institution's mission and agenda for educator preparation and accreditation processes that foster continuous improvement. Institutions will have the opportunity to make their case for accreditation of educator preparation by focusing their self-study on continuous improvement or research of their practices and the four accreditation processes will provide a more accurate way to discover and represent the true quality of educator preparation programs. The four accreditation options include:

- (1) An inquiry brief in which programs present their evidence of the candidates' professional competence in the format of a research monograph,
- (2) A transformation initiative in which educator preparation is undergoing major reform that will also contribute to research of practice,
- (3) A continuous improvement option in which evidence shows that standards continue to be met and that educator preparation is moving significantly toward target levels,
- (4) A program quality control report in which programs show that the quality control system functions as it was designed and that it leads to higher quality.

Each of the CAEP options requires an assessment or quality control system. Each also requires that the evidence submitted by the applicant be organized in a manner that will enable the Commissions, the Board, or any outside reviewer to determine whether CAEP standards are met. Each is based on the review of available reliable and valid evidence and requires the demonstration of sufficient capacity to offer quality P-12 educator preparation.

In addition, CAEP proposes the development of a pre-accreditation process for alternate route pathways and colleges and universities that are initiating educator preparation for the first time.

### **Commissions**

CAEP will have two Commissions that make recommendations about accreditation to the CAEP board. The Commissions will perform the functions currently performed by NCATE's Unit Accreditation Board and TEAC's Accreditation Panel and Accreditation Committee. The names of the two Commissions, at least initially, could include some reference to NCATE or TEAC in their titles, along with CAEP, to give applicants the benefit of the current "*brand*" values, until CAEP has created its own

identity as a high quality accreditor. The Interim Board and the Commissions, when appointed, will move quickly to adopt names for the Commissions that will capture the unique essence of their work.

Each CAEP Commission will be guided in its work by a statement of standards or principles that are aligned with the CAEP Standards. Each includes a formative phase in which the institution is guided and supported in completing its self-study. Each requires a site visit. Institutions accredited by either Commission will submit an annual report to CAEP. CAEP will offer professional development through national workshops, state and regional workshops, webinars, and presentations at national meetings to support faculty from member institutions in their accreditation-related work.

Since both NCATE and TEAC are currently recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) and by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), the accreditation options are of sufficient scope and rigor. However, the CAEP board will be empowered to ensure that such stature and rigor are maintained. It will do so principally by regularly ensuring that both Commissions follow their own processes and by periodically sampling accreditation recommendations, possibly with outside assistance, to ensure that the two Commissions apply similarly rigorous processes in determining that CAEP standards are met.

### **Standards**

CAEP has formally adopted the following three Standards for Educator Preparation:

- (1) Candidates demonstrate knowledge, skills and professional dispositions for effective work in schools.
- (2) Data drive decisions about candidates and programs.
- (3) Resources and practices support candidate learning.

All institutions, regardless of the accreditation option chosen, must have evidence that the CAEP Standards for Educator Preparation are adequately addressed. Institutions are expected to have a functioning quality control system and regularly to collect and analyze valid and reliable evidence regarding candidates' content or subject matter knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and skills, professional knowledge and skills, professional dispositions, and accomplishments in relation to state and professional standards. Evidence must also show that completers are capable of continuing professional growth, using technology in their work, and using their knowledge and skills about diversity to help P-12 students learn. Evidence must show that program planning and decisions are based on evidence of candidate learning. Institutions must also have the capacity to offer sound programs, and maintain the institutional commitment to continue doing so. All this evidence must be organized in a manner that will enable the Commissions, the Board, or any outside reviewer to determine whether CAEP standards are met.

During the two-year transition period during which CAEP is established, each current accreditor (NCATE and TEAC) will continue to refine and improve its respective accreditation options. To as great an extent as possible during that same time period, common procedures, policies and accreditation terms will be developed. Though similar on many dimensions, each Commission’s accreditation options offer distinctive emphases and processes. The following description of the options aims to help institutions understand the distinctions as they consider the option or options that best fit their needs.

<b>Accreditation Options of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation</b>	
<p>All institutional members of CAEP must: (1) meet the eligibility requirements and continue to meet them in order to maintain membership, (2) ensure that accredited programs meet the CAEP Standards, and (3) produce an annual report to CAEP. Institutions with established educator preparation programs can choose from the two options focused on research and the two options focused on improvement. Below are descriptions of how CAEP will define and implement the elements within each option.</p>	
<p><b><u>Pre-Accreditation Process</u></b></p> <p>A pre-accreditation process will be developed for accrediting new programs, such as the many alternative providers that do not have a track record and new teacher education programs in colleges and universities.</p>	
<b>Commission A (currently NCATE)</b>	<b>Commission B (currently TEAC)</b>
<p><b><u>Guiding framework</u></b></p> <p>Existing NCATE Standards and CAEP Standards</p>	<p><b><u>Guiding framework</u></b></p> <p>TEAC’s Quality Principles and CAEP Standards</p>
<p><b><u>Organizational Unit(s)</u></b></p> <p>Commission A accredits the professional education unit(s)<sup>1</sup> that is responsible for educator preparation. For accreditation purposes, programs are organized by initial teacher preparation and advanced preparation, which includes graduate programs for advanced teaching and other school professionals.</p>	<p><b><u>Organizational Unit(s)</u></b></p> <p>Institutions seeking accreditation through Commission B options can organize their work as best suits the evidence they bring forward. Program<sup>1</sup> options (e.g. licensure areas, endorsements, etc.) can be organized into one or more larger program units<sup>1</sup> that share a common logic, structure, quality control system and similar and comparable categories of evidence. Educational leadership programs are generally presented through a separate self-study.</p>

<sup>1</sup> The terms “program” and “unit” have not yet been commonly defined by the Design Team. The development of a common glossary is one of the tasks to be addressed during the two-year transition to CAEP. The terms are being used here as the two organizations currently define them.

<b>Formative Process</b>		<b>Formative Process</b>	
Units submit evidence that they have a well-developed conceptual framework and assessment system. These documents are reviewed by a committee of representatives from stakeholders who write a report approving the institution's readiness to host a visit.		Programs submit drafts of their self-study/studies which are reviewed by a staff evaluator and returned with comments. The formative evaluator and the lead auditor (see below) review a final draft of the self-study document to determine whether or not it is ready to be audited.	
<b>Focus on Research: Transformation Initiative</b>	<b>Focus on Improvement: Continuous Improvement</b>	<b>Focus on Research: Inquiry Brief</b>	<b>Focus on Improvement: Program Quality Audit Report</b>
<b>Self-Study Report</b>	<b>Self-Study Report</b>	<b>Self-Study Report</b>	<b>Self-Study Report</b>
<p>(1) The unit submits an institutional report (IR) that describes how the unit has been involved in continuous improvement related to the standards since the previous visit.</p> <p>An Offsite BOE Team reviews the IR, annual reports, programs submitted for national or equivalent state review, and exhibits of evidence to prepare a report indicating any concerns related to continuing to meet standards. If all evidence indicates that standards continue to be met, the institution will be declared eligible for the Transformation Initiative (TI) option.</p> <p>Prior to the visit, the unit submits an IR Addendum, which responds to the offsite report.</p>	<p>The unit submits an institutional report (IR) that provides an overview of the institution and conceptual framework, responds to three prompts for each standard, and indicates the steps it has taken to move to the target level on at least one standard.</p> <p>An institution seeking accreditation for the first time submits an IR to establish a baseline for meeting the elements of each standard.</p> <p>An Offsite BOE Team reviews the IR, annual reports, programs submitted for national or equivalent state review, and exhibits of evidence to prepare a report indicating any concerns related to meeting the standards.</p> <p>Prior to the visit, the unit submits an IR Addendum, which</p>	<p>The program produces a monograph called an <i>Inquiry Brief</i> showing evidence that program completers have achieved the program's goals, including evidence of candidates' meeting the CAEP Standards.</p> <p>The program must also show evidence of faculty learning, of the existence of a functioning and influential quality control system and of capacity and commitment.</p> <p>The program completes an internal audit of its own quality control system.</p>	<p>The program completes a comprehensive academic audit that encompasses its quality control system and its evidence of candidates' meeting the CAEP Standards. Based on this investigation, the program prepares a <i>Program Quality Audit Report</i>.</p> <p>The program must also show evidence of faculty learning and of institutional capacity for, and commitment to, program quality.</p> <p>The program develops a plan for future inquiry based on reliable and valid evidence of student learning.</p>

<p>(2) The unit submits its proposal for a TI. The Committee on Transformation Initiatives reviews the proposal and provides feedback on the plan and its implementation.</p>	<p>responds to the offsite report.</p>		
<p><b><u>Site Visit Team</u></b></p> <p>The size of the team depends on the size and complexity of educator preparation at the institution, but is generally 3-5 members. State participation on teams is determined by the partnership agreement. The team includes individuals who represent teacher education, the teaching profession and other CAEP stakeholder groups. The team for the TI option also includes an expert on the institution's TI.</p>	<p><b><u>Site Visit Team</u></b></p> <p>The size of the team depends on the size and complexity of educator preparation at the institution, but is generally 3-5 members. State participation on teams is determined by the partnership agreement. The team includes individuals who represent teacher education, the teaching profession and other CAEP stakeholder groups.</p>	<p><b><u>Site Visit Team</u></b></p> <p>Site visits are led by a staff member (the lead auditor) and include one or more peer-reviewers (consulting auditors) and a local practitioner identified by the program. State participation on teams is determined by the partnership agreement.</p>	<p><b><u>Site Visit Team</u></b></p> <p>Site visits are led by a staff member (the lead auditor) who has also provided formative evaluation. The team includes one or more peer-reviewers (consulting auditors) and a local practitioner identified by the program. State participation on teams is determined by the partnership agreement.</p>
<p><b><u>Site Visit Format</u></b></p> <p>The Onsite BOE Team will validate through interviews, visits to schools and review of other evidence that standards continue to be met, follow-up on areas for concern raised in the Offsite BOE Report, and provide feedback on the Transformation Initiative.</p> <p>The Onsite BOE team writes the</p>	<p><b><u>Site Visit Format</u></b></p> <p>The Onsite BOE Team will validate through interviews, visits to schools and review of other evidence that standards continue to be met, follow-up on areas for concern, and provide feedback on progress toward meeting one or more standards at the target level.</p> <p>The Onsite BOE team writes the</p>	<p><b><u>Site Visit Format</u></b></p> <p>The site visit takes the form of an academic audit in which the auditors seek to verify the evidence presented in the Inquiry Brief. Auditors examine original data sources, reanalyze data presented by the program, and corroborate reported data through interviews and data collection.</p>	<p><b><u>Site Visit Format</u></b></p> <p>The site visit takes the form of an academic audit in which the auditors seek to verify the program's own quality control processes and evidence of student learning. In addition, auditors review the program's plan for inquiry.</p> <p>In addition, the Commission conducts independent on-line</p>

<p>team report with recommendations about standards being met and citations of areas for improvement, if any.</p>	<p>team report with recommendations about standards being met and citations of areas for improvement, if any.</p>	<p>In addition, the Commission conducts independent on-line and on-site surveys of students, faculty and cooperating teachers.</p>	<p>and on-site surveys of students, faculty and cooperating teachers.</p>
<p><b><u>Post-Site-Visit Process</u></b></p> <p>The unit may submit a rejoinder to the BOE Report. The team chair may respond to the rejoinder.</p> <p>The Commission conducts an in-depth review of the BOE report, rejoinder, and team chair's response to the rejoinder; it also has access to the unit's IR, Offsite BOE Report, and unit's IR Addendum. The Commission determines whether each standard has been met at both the initial teacher preparation and advanced preparation levels. It recommends a final accreditation decision for each level to the CAEP Board.</p>	<p><b><u>Post-Site-Visit Process</u></b></p> <p>The unit may submit a rejoinder to the BOE Report. The team chair may respond to the rejoinder.</p> <p>The Commission conducts an in-depth review of the BOE report, rejoinder, and team chair's response to the rejoinder; it also has access to the unit's IR, Offsite BOE Report, and unit's IR Addendum. The Commission determines whether each standard has been met at both the initial teacher preparation and advanced preparation levels. It recommends a final accreditation decision for each level to the CAEP Board.</p>	<p><b><u>Post-Site-Visit Process</u></b></p> <p>Auditors prepare an Audit Report, which is first shared with the program, then sent to the TEAC Commission, which evaluates the self-study in light of the audit report and case analysis (prepared by staff).</p> <p>Program representatives may be present when their case is considered by the Commission. The Commission's recommendation regarding accreditation is forwarded to the CAEP Board.</p>	<p><b><u>Post-Site-Visit Process</u></b></p> <p>Auditors prepare an Audit Report, which is first shared with the program, then sent to the TEAC Commission, which evaluates the self-study in light of the audit report and case analysis (prepared by staff).</p> <p>Program representatives may be present when their case is considered by the Commission. The Commission's recommendation regarding accreditation is forwarded to the CAEP Board.</p>
<p><b><u>Determination of Accreditation Status</u></b></p> <p>Each of the Commissions' accreditation recommendations are presented on a Consent Agenda to the CAEP Board, which reviews the process followed in each case and certifies that CAEP has followed its own procedures. The Board makes the final accreditation decisions. When an adverse decision is made by CAEP, an institution may appeal the decision. The CAEP appeals process is common across all program options.</p>			