



# Accreditation Policy

## **Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation**

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## SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) is a non-governmental, voluntary, non-profit association of parties committed to the effective preparation of teachers and other P-12 professional educators. CAEP, through an Accreditation Council, accredits educator preparation providers (EPPs).

The activities of CAEP are carried out by three distinct bodies: the Board of Directors, the Accreditation Council, and the Appeals Council. The duties and responsibilities of these bodies are established in the CAEP Bylaws and each is governed by a distinct set of policies. This policy document contains the policies, including those that are implied by the CAEP Bylaws, for the Accreditation Council and has an accompanying standard operating procedures document which provides specificity regarding how policies are carried out by CAEP staff, Accreditation Councilors, and/or Committees.

If any provision of this document or CAEP's interpretation thereof conflicts with any provision of the Bylaws, the Bylaws shall supersede the conflicting language contained herein.

CAEP publishes a number of guidance documents – including, but not limited to handbook(s) and assessment frameworks – which provide EPPs with additional information on the process and criteria used in the evaluation of evidence. In no case shall any CAEP guidance document supersede this Accreditation Policy. If any provision of any guidance document or CAEP's interpretation thereof conflicts with any provision of this policy, the policy shall govern.

### Policy 1.01 Administration

(a) Dates

To ensure consistency in application of policies and procedures, all deadlines and dates put forth in relation to CAEP Accreditation will use the site visit semester as the foundational date.

(b) Definition of Semester

For the purposes of record keeping and CAEP Accreditation timelines, semesters are defined as follows:

- (1) Spring Semester: January 1 – June 30
- (2) Fall Semester: July 1 – December 31

### Policy 1.02 CAEP Standards

(a) Initial-Licensure and Advanced-Level Standards

CAEP has five standards for initial-licensure and five similar standards for advanced-level programs. (Note: Some standards for advanced-level programs have fewer components than for initial-licensure programs.) The standards serve as the basis for CAEP accreditation reviews and can be found at <http://www.caepnet.org/standards/introduction> (initial-licensure) and <http://caepnet.org/standards/standards-advanced-programs> (advanced-level). The CAEP Board of Directors periodically reviews and updates the CAEP Standards.

(b) Expectations for Accreditation

Regardless of which standards or pathway an EPP was previously accredited under (i.e., NCATE or TEAC standards; CAEP's IB pathway), or if the EPP is entering the accreditation process for the first time or after a lapse, denial, or revocation, the EPP is required to meet all of the applicable initial-licensure and/or advanced-level CAEP Standards.

The CAEP Accreditation Council review panels determine the degree to which each standard has been met basing their conclusions on the preponderance of evidence. The panels identify areas for improvement or stipulations and make recommendations for Accreditation Council action.

(c) Phase-In Rules

EPPs may benefit from “phase-in” rules established to address the need to develop the body of evidence and data required to meet one or more of the CAEP standards. The phase-in rules are time-limited, and there are phase-in rules for the initial-licensure and advanced-level standards. Additional information, including timelines and evidentiary thresholds, are included in the CAEP accreditation handbook(s).

- (1) Expectations for initial-licensure preparation - For EPPs accredited under the standards for initial-licensure programs, rules may be applicable, as follows:

Phase-In Rule – For site visits taking place no later than Spring 2020, an EPP’s self-study report may include plans with progress steps as evidence and/or data for Standards. The Accreditation handbook(s) provides details for collecting, using, and reporting data to be used for data collection. Starting in fall 2020, the phase-in period concludes, and the EPP’s evidence and/or data are evaluated as submitted.

- (2) Expectations for advanced-level preparation - For EPPs accredited under the standards for advanced-level programs, the following phase-in rule may be applicable:

Phase-In Rule – Advanced-Level Programs are first included in EPP self-study reports for site visits in fall 2019. Plans may be submitted as evidence for site visits in fall 2019, spring 2020, fall 2020, and spring 2021 semesters. Self-study reports due for site visits in fall 2021, spring 2022, fall 2022, and spring 2023 semesters must include plans accompanied with progressive cycles of evidence (including any available data). Starting with site visits in fall 2023, the phase-in period concludes, and the EPP’s evidence is evaluated as submitted.

### Policy 1.03 CAEP Management of Legacy Accreditation

(a) Background

In an Agreement and Plan of Merger dated December 13, 2010, representatives of CAEP, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) agreed on the terms by which NCATE and TEAC would merge into CAEP. To facilitate the implementation of the merger, the CAEP Board of Directors voted in favor of the following:

- (1) Through December 31, 2016, CAEP will support Commissions for NCATE and TEAC that will make final decisions to grant or withhold accreditation based on NCATE Standards or TEAC Quality Principles.
- (2) No later than December 31, 2016, NCATE and TEAC will cease to operate as Commissions supported by CAEP. EPPs approved by a Commission will be NCATE or TEAC accredited for the specified term. Any areas for improvement, weaknesses, or stipulations assigned by a Commission will subsequently be handled through the CAEP Accreditation Council.
- (3) After CAEP ceases to support the Commissions, any appeals from decisions of the Commissions will be handled through the Appeals Committee (Article IX) and related CAEP Policy and procedure.

(b) Accreditation Council Oversight of Legacy-Accredited EPPs

- (1) CAEP recognizes an EPP previously accredited by NCATE and TEAC (referred to as legacy accreditation) through the length of the respective accreditation term per the last accreditation decision made by NCATE and TEAC, a Commission, or by the CAEP Accreditation Council, except that any such legacy accreditation is subject to probation or revocation if the EPP fails to meet requirements for continuous accreditation or pursuant to Policy 5.15 Adverse Action. A decision of the Accreditation Council to deny CAEP accreditation to an EPP will be considered as evidence of failure to maintain continuous accreditation and may lead to revocation of legacy accreditation if the term of such accreditation has not expired.
- (2) In order to support the transition of EPPs from NCATE or TEAC accreditation to CAEP Accreditation, the following transition provisions apply:
  - i. Annual Reports: All NCATE- and TEAC-accredited EPPs are required to submit complete annual reports using the CAEP annual report template provided in the accreditation system.
  - ii. Good Standing: An NCATE- or TEAC-accredited EPP in good standing is considered to be continuously accredited. Maintenance of good standing is contingent upon continued compliance with CAEP policies and demonstration, if required by the Accreditation Council, that the EPP continues to meet all of the legacy standards by which it was accredited. Upon expiration of the EPP's NCATE or TEAC term of accreditation, the next accreditation review will be based on the CAEP Standards, policy, and handbook(s), and carried out using the CAEP accreditation process. The EPP is not required to complete the CAEP application process, so long as continuous accreditation is maintained.
  - iii. Resolution of NCATE 2-year reviews: For any NCATE-accredited EPP that still must undergo a full or focused site visit, any such review and subsequent Accreditation Council decision will be based on NCATE Standards, policies, and procedures used for the previous review. Should the accreditation of any such EPP be revoked by the Accreditation Council, the EPP may be entitled to petition for an appeal under NCATE policy.
  - iv. Resolution of TEAC Stipulations: For any TEAC-accredited EPP that still must undergo a document review, as a consequence of having one or more stipulations to correct, any such review and subsequent Accreditation Council decision will be based on TEAC Quality Principles, policies, and procedures. Should the accreditation of any such EPP be revoked by the Accreditation Council, the EPP may be entitled to petition for an appeal under TEAC policy.
  - v. Extensions Granted for Reviews Taking Place Up to Fall 2019: For any NCATE- or TEAC-accredited EPP that has been granted an extension, either by CAEP or the Annual Report Monitoring (ARM) Committee, for an accreditation review that will take place no later than Fall 2019, such review (including the site visit and panel reviews) and subsequent Accreditation Council decision will be based on CAEP Standards, and using the same process or pathway used for the initial review, as appropriate. The CAEP Accreditation Policy and CAEP handbook(s) will apply. Any such EPP may elect to use the CAEP accreditation process for a site visit scheduled to take place through Fall 2019.
  - vi. Extensions Granted for Reviews Taking Place after Fall 2019: For any NCATE- or TEAC-accredited EPP that has been granted an extension, either by CAEP or

ARM, for an accreditation review that will take place after Fall 2019, such review (including the site visit and panel reviews) and subsequent Accreditation Council decision will be based on the CAEP Standards, Accreditation Policy, and handbook(s). All such reviews will be carried out using the CAEP accreditation process.

- (3) Any accreditation review scheduled to take place during and after Fall 2019, whether of a new applicant, for continuing accreditation, or following an approved extension, will be based on the CAEP Standards, Accreditation Policy, and handbook(s). All such reviews will be carried out using the CAEP accreditation process.

**History of Substantive Changes:** June 8, 2019 (Introductory text on legacy accreditation transition and oversight moved to new Section 1.03 and expanded to provide more detail on Council responsibilities. February 26, 2018 (Introduction revised). December 7, 2018 (Policy 1.02(a) revised). April 27, 2018 (Policy 1.02(d) revised to align with Advanced Standards Phase-In timeline approved by the Board). February 26, 2018 (Policy 1.02 revised). October 27, 2017 (Introduction and Policies 1.02(c-d) revised). September 29, 2017 (Policy 1.02 revised). November 9, 2016 (Phase-in plans added).

## SECTION II. ACCREDITATION COUNCIL GOVERNANCE

CAEP Bylaws provide for the establishment and operation of an Accreditation Council.

### Policy 2.01 Operating Authority

The Accreditation Council operates under the authority of the CAEP Board of Directors and is subject to the operational oversight of that Board. Neither the CAEP Board, acting as a body, nor any individual Director with voting rights on the Board shall be involved in the review of EPPs nor any accreditation-related decisions made by the Accreditation Council.

#### (a) Accreditation Council Charge

In furtherance of its objectives, the Accreditation Council is charged with the following:

- (1) Develop and promulgate policies to guide the review, evaluation, and accreditation of EPPs inside and outside the United States, in accordance with the CAEP Standards and Bylaws, NCATE Standards, and TEAC quality principles.
- (2) Perform reviews and evaluations of EPPs to grant, revoke, or deny accreditation.
- (3) Publish accreditation decisions and stipulations.
- (4) Handle complaints against accredited EPPs.
- (5) Develop a quality assurance system that guarantees the fairness and consistency of accreditation decisions.

#### (b) Accreditation Council Responsibility

In keeping with CAEP's Bylaws, the Accreditation Council has the responsibility to carry out CAEP accreditation, including the transition of EPPs from legacy accreditation to CAEP, including the following:

- (1) Formulate and keep up-to-date written statements of accreditation-related policies.
- (2) Determine how to organize itself, by way of committees or otherwise, in order to carry out its responsibilities.

- (3) Adopt and change any of the policies in this policy manual. Changes are subject to review and determination by the CAEP Board of Directors that the Accreditation Council Policy provides consistency and alignment with the operational standards of the Board, including standards related to feasibility and fiscal impacts.

### Policy 2.02 Decision-making Authority

The Accreditation Council is the primary accreditation decision-making body for CAEP. At any meeting of the Accreditation Council, a majority of Accreditation Councilors then in service must participate in order to establish a quorum. Unless specified otherwise in Bylaws or policy, a majority vote of the Councilors present at any duly convened Accreditation Council meeting determines the accreditation status for an EPP under consideration by the Council.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policy 2.02 revised).

### Policy 2.03 Meetings

CAEP holds two (2) regular meetings of the Accreditation Council each year at such places and times as the Chair, Vice Chair, or CAEP senior leadership designate. Any additional meeting shall be considered a Special Meeting pursuant to Bylaws.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policy 2.03 revised).

### Policy 2.04 Number of Councilors

Not less than once every three (3) years, the Executive Committee of the Accreditation Council, acting upon a recommendation of the CAEP president, will review the number of projected cases to be considered and set the number of Councilors needed to carry out the required reviews.

**History of Substantive Changes:** June 7, 2019 (Policy 2.04 revised to include the Executive Committee in decision-making. February 26, 2018 (Policy 2.04 revised). September 29, 2017 (Policies 2.04(d) and 2.04(g) revised).

### Policy 2.05 Composition of the Accreditation Council

#### (a) Commitment to Diversity

CAEP's commitment to diversity adjures the Accreditation Council to do the following:

- (1) Seek opportunities to increase the diversity of its volunteer base; seeking equitable representation of ethnicity, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, exceptionality, age, geographic region, roles and professional background, and type and size of organizations for which volunteers work.
- (2) Balance representation from the various stakeholder groups of higher education representatives, P-12 practitioners, employers, policy makers, public, student, and at-large representatives.
- (3) Ensure no fewer than one-seventh (1/7) of Councilors are representatives of the public.

#### (b) Public Representatives

A representative of the public is a person who is not:



- (1) An employee, member of the governing board, owner, or shareholder of, or consultant to an institution or EPP that is either accredited by CAEP or has applied for accreditation;
- (2) A member of any trade association or membership organization related to, affiliated with, or associated with CAEP; or
- (3) A spouse, parent, child, or sibling of an individual identified in Policy 2.05(b)(1) or 2.05(b)(2) of this definition.

(c) Qualifications of Councilors

Except for representatives of the public, the Accreditation Council is composed of individuals meeting at least one (1) of the following criteria which are applied through the selection process detailed in the Accreditation Council operating procedures:

- (1) Have served as a CAEP nationally trained site visitor.
- (2) Have served as an assessment or accreditation coordinator or in a position overseeing the EPP accreditation process.
- (3) Is a National Board certified teacher.
- (4) Is recommended for membership by a state, the National Education Association (NEA) or the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).
- (5) Has experience as an employer or policy maker from a local or state education agency.
- (6) Is a national or state officer in an organization dedicated to P-16 education.

Volunteers may not serve concurrently in the role of Accreditation Councilor and Site Visitor.

(d) Election and Term of Councilors

Councilors shall be elected or re-elected from a slate of candidates put forth by the Selection Committee of the Accreditation Council. A Majority Vote of Councilors present at any duly convened meeting of the Accreditation Council (as defined in Bylaws) shall elect or re-elect Councilors.

All Councilors may be elected for a term of up to three-years (3). No Councilor may serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. A Councilor who has served two (2) consecutive terms may, upon re-election, return to service following a one-year (1) absence from the Council.

(e) Training of Councilors

Prior to engaging in any decision-making process as a representative on the Accreditation Council, Councilors must successfully complete CAEP-approved training activities.

(f) Alternate Councilors

The Accreditation Council Chair or Vice-Chair may call on former Councilors to serve as Alternate Councilors ("Alternates") from a list maintained by the Selection Committee, when the number of Councilors available for the review of cases falls below the minimum of three (3) Councilors per review case. Alternates are called into service, as needed, for a single meeting, during which the Alternate will serve as a Councilor with full Councilor voting rights. An Alternate may be called for consecutive meetings.

(g) Removal of Councilors

Any Councilor, Alternate, or Officer of the Accreditation Council may be removed at any time. A councilor's failure to participate in two (2) consecutive Accreditation Council Meetings shall

be grounds for removal with cause. A Majority Vote of the Councilors then in service is required for removal with cause. A vote of two-thirds of the Councilors then in service is required for removal without cause. Accreditation system access is revoked immediately upon removal.

(h) Resignation

Councilors may resign at any time by written notice to CAEP staff or the Chair of the Accreditation Council. The resignation shall be effective at the time specified in the notice, or upon receipt if no time is specified. Acceptance of a resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. Accreditation system access is revoked immediately upon resignation.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policies 2.05(d), 2.05(f), and 2.05(g) revised). February 26, 2018 (Policy 2.05 revised). June 9, 2017 (Policy 2.05 revised).

### Policy 2.06 Officers of the Accreditation Council

(a) Chair of the Accreditation Council

The Chair of the Accreditation Council is elected by the CAEP Board of Directors from among its Directors. The term of the Accreditation Council Chair shall be concurrent with his or her term as a Director on the CAEP Board per Bylaws Section 6.05. The Accreditation Council Chair shall not be entitled to vote on Accreditation Council matters.

(b) Vice Chair of the Accreditation Council

The Vice Chair of the Accreditation Council is elected by a majority vote of the Councilors present at a duly convened meeting, and shall serve as a Member Ex Officio of the CAEP Board of Directors without the right to vote on Board matters. The Vice Chair shall serve in such capacity for a term of two (2) years and is subject to a limit of two (2) consecutive terms. The Vice Chair shall be entitled to vote on Accreditation Council matters and will serve as the Chair of the Accreditation Council Policy Committee. Notwithstanding Policy 2.05(d), the Vice Chair may remain on the Accreditation Council for as long as he/she is also serving in the role.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policies 2.06(a-b) revised). February 26, 2018 (Policy 2.06 revised).

### Policy 2.07 Restriction on Participation of Councilors

If the EPP for which a Councilor is currently employed is under consideration by the Accreditation Council, the Councilor will be restricted from participating in their role as an Accreditation Councilor at the Accreditation Council meeting at which the Council is expected to make a decision regarding the EPP's accreditation. Such restriction is not required with regard to Accreditation Council consideration of a motion for Good Cause Extension under 0.

Any absence from an Accreditation Council meeting resulting from this required restriction may not be used as cause for removal of a Councilor under 0(g).

Any Councilor restricted for participation under this section will not be counted as a "voting member of the Accreditation Council then in service" for purposes of establishing a quorum under Bylaws Section 8.10 or for any Removal of Councilors action under Section 2.05(g).

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policy 2.07 revised). February 26, 2018 (Policy 2.07 revised). October 27, 2017 (Policy 2.07 revised). September 29, 2017 (Policy 2.07(1-4) revised; Policy 2.07(c) re: Committee Leadership removed).

## Policy 2.08 Committees

### (a) Committees

The Accreditation Council shall establish, charge, and oversee the following Committees as well as any other committees deemed necessary to address priorities set forth by the Accreditation Council in support of the work of the Council:

- (1) Annual Report Monitoring (ARM) Committee: The Committee is responsible for review of the annual report process and submissions. ARM reviews and approves or denies requests from the EPP for extensions longer than one year. The Committee shall elect a Chair from among its members. The Chair is elected for a two-year term or through the end of his/her Councilor term, whichever is shorter.
- (2) Policy Committee: The Committee is responsible for reviewing and making recommendations on proposed changes to Accreditation Council policies. In addition, the Policy Committee reviews all motions from Committees placed on the agenda for action by the Accreditation Council. The Accreditation Council Vice Chair serves as the Chair of the Committee throughout the duration of his/her term as Vice Chair.
- (3) Site Visit Oversight Committee: The Committee is responsible for reviewing all site visitor volunteer applications and makes appointment recommendations to the Accreditation Council. The Committee shall elect a Chair from among its members. The Chair is elected for a two-year term or through the end of his/her Councilor term, whichever is shorter.
- (4) Selection Committee: The Committee is responsible for reviewing all Councilor applications and makes election recommendations to the Accreditation Council. The Committee also maintains a list of individuals eligible to serve as Alternate Councilors. The Committee shall elect a Chair from among its members. The Chair is elected for a two-year term or through the end of his/her Councilor term, whichever is shorter.
- (5) Complaint Committee: When a complaint against an EPP is received by the Accreditation Council, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council shall appoint a Complaint Committee of not more than five (5) individuals to review the complaint and make recommendations to the Council. One (1) Councilor from each of the four (4) Committees shall be selected to serve on the Complaint Committee with the Chair of the Accreditation Council serving as Chair.
- (6) Executive Committee: The Committee is responsible for making time-sensitive decisions on behalf of the Accreditation Council, as needed, between meetings; however, the Committee shall not make or amend accreditation decisions. Actions of the Committee shall include but are not limited to the following:
  - i. Receiving reports, negative evaluations or complaints against CAEP that involve site visitors, Accreditation Councilors, or Appeals Councilors, and recommending or taking action as appropriate.
  - ii. Following each meeting, reviewing and approving recommendations from CAEP staff for non-substantive changes needed to fix inaccuracies to action reports; however any proposed edit to an action report that would result in the addition or

deletion of an AFI or stipulation, a change in the accreditation decision, or a change in the term of accreditation would be a substantive change and, as such, the Committee would need to have any such change approved by the Accreditation Council through a reconsideration process under Policy 10.03(b).

- iii. Pursuant to Accreditation Policy 2.04, setting the number of Councilors.
- iv. Pursuant to Accreditation Policy 10.03(a) and (b), deciding whether to approve any recommendation from the CAEP president for reconsideration of a decision.
- v. Reviewing site visitor evaluation reports compiled by CAEP staff and recommending action as appropriate.

The Executive Committee shall be made up of the Chair (ex officio), Vice Chair (ex officio), and not more than three (3) additional Accreditation Councilors elected using the approval voting method. Any vacancy shall be filled with the election of a Councilor in good standing upon the nomination of any Councilor then in service. Any Councilor so elected shall serve a two-year term on the committee and is subject to a limit of two consecutive terms on the Executive Committee. Notwithstanding Policy 2.05(d), an Executive Committee member may remain on the Accreditation Council through the end of his/her Executive Committee term.

(b) Committee Charges

At the start of CAEP's fiscal year, the Chair of the Accreditation Council, in conjunction with the Vice Chair and designated CAEP staff liaison, shall provide each Committee, with the exception of the Complaints Committee and Executive Committee, with its charge.

(c) Appointment of Committee Members

Except as provided otherwise in this section, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Accreditation Council shall appoint Councilors to Committees. Assignments to the various Committees will be based, in part, on preferences solicited from Councilors and CAEP's commitment to diversity and representation. Committee membership is limited to individuals serving on the Accreditation Council.

(d) Staff Liaison

Each Committee shall be assigned a CAEP staff liaison.

**History of Substantive Changes:** June 7, 2019 (Policy 2.08 amended to indicate that the Vice Chair serves as chair of the Policy Committee throughout his/her term and to provide for the responsibilities and composition of the Executive Committee. December 7, 2018 (Policy 2.08 revised). February 26, 2018 (Policy 2.08 revised).

### SECTION III. SCOPE OF ACCREDITATION

As defined in CAEP Governance Policy, the scope of CAEP's work is the accreditation of educator preparation providers (EPPs) that offer bachelor's, master's, and/or doctoral degrees, post-baccalaureate or other programs leading to certification, licensure, or endorsement in the United States and/or internationally.

EPPs must include the following in their submission for CAEP's review:

*All licensure areas that prepare candidates to work in preschool through grade 12 settings at the initial and advanced level that lead to professional licensure, certification, or*

*endorsement as defined by the state, country, or other governing authority under which the EPP operates and for which the state, country, or other governing authority has established program approval standards.*

EPPs with programs at both the initial-licensure and advanced-level, as defined in this Section, are required to undergo initial- and advanced-level accreditation reviews on the same cycle. The EPP will submit a single self-study report and receive two separate accreditation decisions (one for initial-licensure and one for advanced-level).

The following applies if the decisions are not equivalent:

- If the decision(s) include stipulations or probationary accreditation, (a)(4) will apply for the affected licensure level(s).
- If the EPP does not receive accreditation under either the initial- or advanced-level standards, the EPP has the option of having the next review take place prior to the end of the current term of accreditation so long as the process does not begin for at least one (1) year after the final decisions have been made consistent with Policy 5.14(b).
- Initial or advanced-level programs that are not accredited, so long as they are within the scope covered by Policies 3.01 and 3.02, will be included in the next accreditation.

CAEP-accredited EPPs are required to distinguish accurately between programs that are accredited and those that are not.

**History of Substantive Changes:** June 7, 2019 (Submission requirements revised; added requirement that EPPs accurately distinguish between programs that are accredited and those that are not.) September 29, 2017 (Section III Introduction revised).

### Policy 3.01 Initial-Licensure Preparation

Initial-Licensure Preparation is provided through programs at the baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate levels leading to initial-licensure, certification, or endorsement that are designed to develop P-12 teachers. All programs offered by the EPP that fall within CAEP's scope must be submitted in a single self-study report that addresses CAEP Standards for Initial-Licensure Programs. Degrees for other school professionals, such as reading specialists, are addressed in the section that follows. For specialty area programs recognized by another accreditor, reference Policy 5.11.

**History of Substantive Changes:** February 26, 2018 (Policy 3.01 revised). September 29, 2017 (Policy 3.01 revised).

### Policy 3.02 Advanced-Level Preparation

Advanced-Level Preparation is provided through programs at the post-baccalaureate or graduate levels leading to licensure, certification, or endorsement. Advanced-Level Programs are designed to develop P-12 teachers who have already completed an initial-licensure program, currently licensed administrators, or other certified (or similar state language) school professionals for employment in P-12 schools/districts. All programs offered by the EPP that fall within CAEP's scope must be submitted in a single self-study report that addresses CAEP Standards for Advanced-Level Programs. For specialty area programs recognized by another accreditor, reference Policy 5.11.

Advanced-level programs not reviewed by CAEP include the following:

- Any advanced-level program not specific to the preparation of teachers or other school professionals for P-12 schools/districts.
- Any advanced-level non-licensure programs, including those specific to content areas (e.g., M.A., M.S., Ph.D.).
- Educational leadership programs not specific to the preparation of teachers or other school professionals for P-12 schools/districts.

**History of Substantive Changes:** June 7, 2019 (Submission requirements revised, including removal of detail on the exclusion of add-on programs; added requirement that EPPs accurately distinguish between programs that are accredited and those that are not.) December 7, 2018 (Policy 3.02 revised). February 26, 2018 (Policy 3.02 revised). September 29, 2017 (Policy 3.02(a) revised). June 9, 2017 (Policy 3.02(b) revised).

**History of Other Substantive Changes - Section III:** December 7, 2018 (Section III revised). June 7, 2018 (Section III revised). May 23, 2018 (Section III revised). February 26, 2018 (Section III revised).

## SECTION IV. CAEP ELIGIBILITY AND CONTINUING ACCREDITATION

An EPP seeking accreditation from CAEP may do so through either the eligibility process or the continuing accreditation process, neither of which shall be considered preaccreditation as defined by the U.S. Department of Education. Eligibility status or continuing accreditation status is not a determination by CAEP that the EPP is progressing toward accreditation and/or has met any of the CAEP standards.

### Policy 4.01 CAEP Eligibility

An EPP seeking first-time, or initial accreditation must complete a two (2) part application process. Part 1 establishes the status of the applicant and Part 2 establishes accreditation eligibility. After acceptance of the Part 1 application, the EPP must submit the Part 2 application within one (1) year and schedule a site visit within a three (3) year period. The site visit must occur within five (5) years of the date of acceptance of the Part 1 application.

(a) Part 1: Applicant Status

The Part 1 application is completed by the EPP's administrator (e.g., CEO, Dean, or Director), signed by the administrator and the president/CEO, and submitted to CAEP.

(b) Part 2: Accreditation Eligibility

Upon acceptance of the Part 1 application, the EPP completes Part 2 of the application process and submits it to CAEP.

(c) Lapse of Eligibility

- (1) If the Part 2 application is not submitted and/or the site visit is not scheduled within the relevant time span, the EPP's status will revert to inactive and the EPP must wait one (1) year before submitting a new Part 1 application.
- (2) In the event an EPP undertaking initial accreditation fails to pay annual fees and/or submit an annual report, the EPP's status will revert to inactive and the EPP must wait one (1) year before submitting a new Part 1 application.

(d) International EPPs

CAEP accreditation of an international EPP follows these Accreditation Council policies as well as the guidelines in the accreditation handbook(s). Additional policies for an international EPP are as follows:

- (1) If there are components of a standard or standards that are not attainable due to a legal restriction and/or governmental or societal context, the international EPP shall identify them during the application process and provide a justification for why the standard cannot be attained.
- (2) In cases where an international EPP cannot comply with one or more of the seven (7) capacity elements as stated by the U.S. Department of Education, the EPP shall provide a justification for why evidence cannot be submitted during Part 2 of the application to indicate the readiness of the EPP for CAEP accreditation. CAEP staff shall determine whether supplemental information must be submitted in lieu of the missing capacity element(s).
- (3) At the time of application to CAEP, the international EPP must designate the government authority to which it reports, providing complete contact information for that agency. Any governmental partnership agreements must be clearly described. In addition, the EPP must provide written authorization from the designated government authority as part of the application process.
- (4) The EPP must define the term(s) used in its country for educator credentialing and the grades/childhood designations covered.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policies 4.01(a), 4.01(b), and 4.01(d) revised). February 26, 2018 (Policy 4.01 revised). September 29, 2017 (Policy 4.01(c) revised).

### Policy 4.02 Continuing Accreditation

An EPP in good standing and currently accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) or the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) is considered to be continuously accredited through legacy processes established to support the work of these organizations following the decision to merge NCATE and TEAC into CAEP.

Any such EPP is not required to complete the CAEP application process described in Section 1, above, so long as continuous accreditation is maintained. CAEP recognizes an EPP accredited by NCATE or TEAC through the length of the accreditation term per the last accreditation decision made by NCATE or TEAC. Upon expiration of an EPP's NCATE or TEAC term of accreditation and in no instance later than 2023, the EPP's next accreditation review will be based on CAEP Standards.

Since January 1, 2017, all accreditation-related activities, including the submission of annual reports and the resolution of stipulations, are subject to the provisions of the Accreditation Policy in order to support the transition of EPPs from NCATE or TEAC accreditation to CAEP accreditation.

**History of Substantive Changes:** March 21, 2018 (Policy 4.02 moved to Section X: Administration). February 26, 2018 (Policy 4.02 revised).

## SECTION V. ACCREDITATION PROCESS

The CAEP accreditation process includes a series of steps for the EPP:

- Successfully complete the CAEP application as defined in Policy 4.01(a) and (b), if needed.
- Select the program review option (as allowed in the State Partnership Agreement).
- Submit a self-study report (SSR) containing the EPP's evidence of meeting CAEP Standards, and, for continuing accreditation, evidence that any previously identified areas for improvement or stipulations from a prior accreditation have been addressed.
- Receive and respond to the Formative Feedback Report (FFR) prepared by the site team in the form of an addendum, prior to the site visit.
- Undergo a site visit and provide additional evidence in response to requests by the site team. No additional evidence can be submitted for review after 5:00 PM local time on the last full day of the site visit.
- The site team submits a site visit report to which the EPP can submit a rejoinder, both are reviewed by the Accreditation Council.
- At the Accreditation Council meeting, respond to initial review panel questions related to case materials (e.g., SSR, site visit reports, and amendments) see Policy 5.10(b).

Expectations of the EPP include, but are not limited to:

- The self-study report and all evidence are to be provided in English.
- Site visits will be conducted with English as the language of interaction, although English does not have to be the language of instruction within the EPP.
- When requested, the EPP is responsible for providing translators who are familiar with the preparation of educators.

**History of Substantive Changes:** June 7, 2019 (Introductory text amended to include a more specific deadline for an EPPs submission of evidence)

### Policy 5.01 Transition

Prior to January 2017, each EPP, in keeping with applicable state or international partnership agreements with CAEP, selected one (1) of two accreditation pathways.

- The Inquiry Brief (IB) pathway in which evidence showed that all CAEP Standards were addressed and the EPP presented evidence for its claims of candidates' effective teaching of all P-12 students, its own capacity for quality, and its system for continuous improvement.
- The Selected Improvement (SI) pathway in which evidence showed that all CAEP Standards were addressed and the EPP presented data to indicate how its candidates' effective teaching of all P-12 students would be improved.

Since January 1, 2017, pathways are no longer an option for an EPP, there is one CAEP accreditation process followed by all EPPs that are new entrants into CAEP Accreditation. Upon expiration of an EPP's current term of accreditation, the EPP's next accreditation review for NCATE, TEAC, or CAEP will be carried out under CAEP's single Accreditation process.

**History of Substantive Changes:** February 26, 2018 (Policy 5.01 revised).



## Policy 5.02 Program Review and Evidence Review of Standard 1

In keeping with applicable state or international partnership agreements with CAEP, as part of the accreditation process, CAEP requires the EPP to provide information about the quality of educator preparation for specialty licensure areas through review at the program level. CAEP offers three program review options for its state and non-U.S. partners to choose from, namely (a) the Specialized Professional Association (SPA) Program Review with National Recognition, (b) CAEP Evidence Review of Standard 1, and (c) the State Program Review.

The state may choose from among the three options or a combination of them for the review of specialty licensure areas by EPPs within its jurisdiction. An EPP's selection of program review option(s) will be determined by the CAEP-state agreement. In the absence of a CAEP-state agreement, the EPP can choose among the following program review options.

### Program Review Options

- (a) Program Review with National Recognition: An EPP's specialty areas submit program reports responding to standards defined by the relevant specialized professional associations (SPAs). Program reports are reviewed by the appropriate SPA, and the SPA provides a report on its findings in relation to its professional standards and determines the recognition status of the submitted programs. Site visitors and Councilors review SPA findings as part of the accreditation decision-making process.
- (b) CAEP Evidence Review of Standard 1: An EPP's specialty areas are reviewed within the context of the EPP's site visit through disaggregated data for all specialty areas in the site visit report. All data submitted as evidence for Standard 1/A.1 must be disaggregated by specialty area for review. Site visitors and Councilors review specialty area data as part of the accreditation decision-making process.
- (c) State Program Review: An EPP's specialty areas are reviewed by the state or international agency. State or international agency reports are made available to the EPP and CAEP site visitors. Site visitors and Councilors review specialty licensure area reports from the state or international agency as part of the accreditation decision-making process. The EPP must coordinate with its respective state to provide to CAEP the state agency report on the EPP's specialty areas.

**History of Substantive Changes:** June 7, 2019 (Policy 5.02 amended to rename Program review with Feedback to Evidence Review of Standard 1; removed provision on non-submission of Program Review), February 26, 2018 (Policy 5.02 revised).

## Policy 5.03 Self-Study Report (SSR)

### (a) SSR Submission

At least nine (9) months prior to its scheduled site visit, an EPP submits a self-study report to CAEP. The site team reviews the self-study report and provides feedback to the EPP through a formative feedback report. The EPP is allowed to submit an addendum to the self-study report in response to the formative feedback report. The self-study report, formative feedback report, and addendum are reviewed by the site team. The self-study report presents the following:

- (1) Complete evidence for all elements of the SSR including CAEP Standards and cross-cutting themes.

- (2) Complete evidence for the capacity areas identified by the USED.
  - (3) Complete evidence that each of these areas has been examined and evaluated in relation to distance-education programs if applicable.
- (b) Late Submission of the SSR
- Late submission of the self-study report by the EPP may result in lapse of eligibility and/or lapse of accreditation for currently accredited EPPs.
- (c) Incomplete Submission of the SSR
- An incomplete submission of the self-study report may result in lapse of eligibility and/or lapse of accreditation for currently accredited EPPs.

**History of Substantive Changes:** February 26, 2018 (Policy 5.03 revised).

#### Policy 5.04 Scheduling the Site Visit

Upon receipt of Accreditation Council action for continuing accreditation, or upon receipt of CAEP eligibility, an EPP is notified to contact CAEP and provide three (3) preferred dates for site visits. These dates should be set at least eighteen (18) months prior to the expiration of the accreditation cycle or set in collaboration with the state or country agency.

**History of Substantive Changes:** February 26, 2018 (Policy 5.04 revised). October 27, 2017 (Policy 5.04 revised).

#### Policy 5.05 Formative Feedback Report and SSR Addendum

Upon receipt by CAEP of the SSR and after the assignment of a site team, written feedback is provided to the EPP on the content and format of their self-study reports and feedback on or requests for clarification of evidence. The formative feedback report is provided to the EPP no less than five (5) months before the site visit.

The EPP has sixty (60) days after receipt of the formative feedback report to submit its addendum response to CAEP.

**History of Substantive Changes:** February 26, 2018 (Policy 5.05 revised). October 27, 2017 (Policy 5.05 revised).

#### Policy 5.06 Virtual Site Visits

Virtual site visits are not the standard type of visit undergone by an EPP. Virtual site visits are conducted by the site visitors not physically present in the EPP location. Virtual site visits require the use of a video or web conferencing tool which allows synchronous communication among participants and visual display of documents. Policy 7.09 Observers on Site Teams and Site Visits is applicable to the composition of virtual site teams.

Neither the rigor or quality of the review nor the opportunities for the EPP to provide evidence are curtailed.

In addition to virtual site visits used for stipulation reviews (see Policy 5.14(b)), virtual site visits may be scheduled by CAEP in consultation with the EPP in situations such as:

- a manmade or natural disaster prohibits the customary on-site evaluation;
- the safety of site visitors is in question;
- situations where it is not feasible for the site team to reach a campus location;
- international reviews; and/or
- special cases as approved by the President and Chair or Vice Chair of the Accreditation Council.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policy 5.06 revised). February 26, 2018 (Policy 5.06 revised).

### Policy 5.07 Activities during the Site Visit

During the site visit, the site team:

- Examines the evidence cited in the self-study report;
- Conducts interviews of EPP administrators, faculty and/or instructors, candidates, graduates, employers, and other members of the professional community as appropriate; and
- Conducts other investigations into the cited evidence.

At the conclusion of the site visit, the lead site visitor or designee presents an oral exit summary to the EPP with a preliminary summary of the strength of the evidence and findings and recommendations with respect to stipulations and AFIs to be made to the Accreditation Council.

The site team does not make recommendations or assessments regarding whether standards are met or unmet or provide a written summary to the EPP.

**History of Substantive Changes:** June 7, 2019 (Policy 5.07 amended to remove details on site visit report submission due to redundant provisions in 5.08); February 26, 2018 (Policy 5.07 revised).

### Policy 5.08 Site Visit Report, Optional EPP Rejoinder, and Response

Within thirty (30) days after the site visit, the final report of the site team is submitted to CAEP (via the accreditation system). The report contains the following:

- Findings about the evidence that was examined, what was verified or not verified, and the methodologies used.
- Findings regarding the quality of the evidence and an analysis of the balance between confirmed and unconfirmed evidence, and any particular strengths or weaknesses for components of CAEP Standards.
- Recommend AFIs and stipulations to the Accreditation Council.
- A summary evaluation of the completeness, quality, and strength of evidence for each standard.

The EPP may opt to submit a rejoinder within thirty (30) days after the receipt of the site visit report. The rejoinder may not include new evidence. The lead site visitor has the opportunity to respond to the rejoinder.

**History of Substantive Changes:** June 7, 2019 (Policy 5.08 amended to require a site visit report to be submitted via the accreditation system); December 7, 2018 (Policy 5.08 revised).

## Policy 5.09 Timeliness

The timely submission of materials is important to the execution of the accreditation process. Failure on the part of the EPP to meet timelines may result in adverse impact to the accreditation review.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policy 5.09 revised). February 26, 2018 (Policy 5.09 revised).

## Policy 5.10 Accreditation Review and Decision

### (a) Composition of Review Panels

Before each meeting of the Accreditation Council, CAEP staff, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, will assign Councilors that have been confirmed as participants to review panels. Initial Review Panels generally have three (3) Councilors assigned; however, as few as two (2) Councilors may constitute a properly established Initial Review Panel. Joint Review Panels are made up of the Councilors assigned to an Initial Review Panel, plus additional Councilors assigned so that the number of Joint Review Panelists does not exceed eight (8).

### (b) Initial Review Panel

The initial review panel reviews the EPP's case and makes a recommendation regarding whether an EPP meets all CAEP Standards (Initial-Licensure and/or Advanced-Level) and confirms or modifies the recommendations made by the site team.

The initial review panel provides the EPP an opportunity to meet for no more than twenty (20) minutes, either in person or virtually. The purpose of this meeting is for the EPP to respond to clarifying questions. The EPP may not present new evidence. The lead site visitor, State Lead, and/or state agency representative may also be invited to, and attend, this meeting.

### (c) Joint Review Panel

After the initial review panel, a joint review panel reviews the initial panel's recommendations and either concurs with or modifies the initial panel's recommendation.

### (d) Accreditation Council Review and Decision

Recommendations from the joint review panel are considered and acted upon by the Accreditation Councilors present at a duly convened meeting. In order for an accreditation status vote to carry, there must be a quorum present and, unless otherwise provided for in this policy, a majority vote in favor of the status.

### (e) Calibration

Calibration activities will occur at least annually to ensure consistency in decision-making by the Accreditation Council.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policies 5.10 (a-d) revised). February 26, 2018 (Policy 5.10 revised). September 29, 2017 (Policy 5.10 revised). June 9, 2017 (Policies 5.10(b-c) revised; Policy 5.10(d) removed).

## Policy 5.11 Regional, Institutional, and Specialty Accreditation Recognition

### (a) Regional or Institutional Accreditation Agencies

CAEP requires the U.S. entity in which the EPP is located to be accredited by a regional or institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). The EPP must be accredited by this agency prior to applying to CAEP. An EPP located outside of the United States must be recognized by the appropriate quality assurance agency in the country. In order to establish eligibility for CAEP accreditation, an EPP not located in a higher education institution or for which in-country quality assurance recognition is not available, is required to provide alternative evidence of its capacity to offer educator preparation programs.

(b) Reciprocal Recognition of Specialty Accreditation

CAEP recognizes that some EPPs may wish to secure accreditation of specialty area programs by specialized accrediting agencies (e.g., music, library science, school counseling, etc.). An EPP that has secured specialty area accreditation from a specialized accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education or CHEA can choose to have such program(s) exempted from review by CAEP. In this circumstance, the program will not be recognized as accredited by CAEP and the EPP will not be required to report the number of completers in these program(s) in the annual report submitted to CAEP. However, if the EPP chooses to have these program(s) be part of the CAEP accreditation process and recognized by CAEP, evidence required to meet the CAEP standards must be submitted for review, and completer numbers must be reported in the CAEP annual report.

### Policy 5.12 Inclusion of Programs in Multiple Sites, Including Distance Learning

(a) Required Evidence for Multiple Sites

An EPP operating at multiple sites must provide evidence to meet the following conditions at each site:

- (1) Requirements for delivery as set forth by the relevant regional accreditor(s) are met.
- (2) The accreditation plan satisfies the USED requirements in terms of the scope and programs to be reviewed.
- (3) The state/country authorizes and/or approves programs that lead to licensure, certification, or their equivalent, if the state/country requires such authorization and approval.
- (4) The certification/licensure opportunities within and across states/countries are disclosed to candidates.
- (5) The quality assurance system ensures that data are sufficient to represent quality throughout the EPP.

(b) Site Visits to Multiple Sites

When scheduling the site visit, an EPP with multiple sites must determine, in consultation with CAEP staff and state/country partners, how the EPP's scope of authority will be defined as well as where and how the visits to multiple sites, if any, will be scheduled. Evidence in the self-study report and any assessment data should be disaggregated for off-site or on-line programs only if the program is distinct from the other programs. Otherwise, the data and evidence from multiple sites are aggregated within respective specialty areas of study.

(c) Distance Learning

CAEP's review of distance education programs may be modified in response to state authorization requirements for such programs, and any federal requirements regarding distance education program accreditation.

For entirely on-line or distance learning programs, CAEP will review the process used by faculty and the EPP to verify the identity of candidates enrolled in such programs.

**History of Substantive Changes:** February 26, 2018 (Policy 5.12 revised).

### Policy 5.13 Third Party Comments

An EPP is required to solicit third party comment on its qualifications for accreditation as part of the accreditation review process. Not less than sixteen (16) weeks prior to the scheduled date of a site visit, both the EPP and CAEP must publicly announce the upcoming accreditation review and the date of the site visit to provide time for interested stakeholders to make comments. This includes but is not limited to, full-time and adjunct faculty/educators, staff, candidates, cooperating teachers and/or mentors, completers, and employers. The EPP is required to provide evidence to CAEP within seven (7) days of such notice being posted. If an EPP does not provide evidence that it has sought third party comment, CAEP reserves the right to reschedule the site visit.

CAEP accepts written comments from stakeholders up to six (6) weeks before the site visit and provides these comments to the EPP. The EPP can respond to any written comments received prior to the scheduled site visit. The response must be received by CAEP no less than two (2) weeks prior to the site visit. Third party comments and the EPP response, if any, are submitted in the accreditation system and become part of data considered by the site team as it conducts the site visit.

**History of Substantive Changes:** February 26, 2018 (Policy 5.13 revised). October 27, 2017 (Policy 5.13 revised).

### Policy 5.14 Accreditation Terms and Definitions

#### (a) Terms

The accreditation term establishes the interval for a comprehensive re-evaluation of the EPP and begins on the date when the Accreditation Council renders the decision and extends until the Council's next accreditation decision. Unless otherwise established in an agreement entered into between CAEP and one or more state agency or entity (referred to as a state partnership agreement), the accreditation terms are:

- (1) Seven (7) years for full accreditation;
- (2) Five (5) years if the EPP's status was previously: (1) two (2) year probationary accreditation and the Accreditation Council subsequently issues a decision of Accreditation; or (2) a stipulation was assigned and corrected;
- (3) Three (3) years if the EPP's status was previously a two (2) year accreditation with stipulation(s) followed by probationary accreditation; or
- (4) Two (2) years for a probationary accreditation or accreditation with stipulation(s).

#### (b) Decisions

The following decisions can be made on accreditation cases and may, but are not expected to be, sequential:

- (1) Accreditation is granted for seven (7) years if the EPP meets all of the CAEP Standards, even if areas for improvement (AFIs) are identified in the final report of the Accreditation Council.

- (2) Accreditation with Stipulation(s) is granted for two (2) years if an EPP receives one (1) or more stipulations and all CAEP standards are met.

A targeted response to the stipulations(s) must be submitted by the EPP and is reviewed by a two- to three-person virtual site team. The resulting site visit report is submitted to the Accreditation Council for review and consideration for stipulation removal.

- i. Failure to submit a response to the stipulation(s) results in revocation.
- ii. Failure to correct the condition leading to the stipulation(s) results in revocation or probationary accreditation.
- iii. The Accreditation Council may choose to remove the stipulation following correction of the condition(s) leading to the stipulation.

- (3) Probationary Accreditation is granted for two (2) years when an EPP does not meet one (1) of the CAEP Standards.

- i. A targeted self-study report to the unmet standard must be submitted by the EPP and is reviewed by a 2- or 3-person site team as part of a targeted site visit. The resulting site visit report is submitted to the Accreditation Council for review.
  - The Accreditation Council may choose to identify the standard as “met” following correction of the condition leading to the unmet standard.
  - The Accreditation Council may choose to apply accreditation or accreditation with stipulations following a correction of the condition(s) leading to probation.
  - Failure to correct the condition leading to the unmet standard results in revocation or denial.
- ii. For a stipulation on a component not related to the unmet standard, a targeted response to the stipulation(s) must be addressed in accordance with Policy 5.14(b)(2).

- (4) Revocation (for Continuing) or Denial (for Initial) of accreditation occurs if an EPP does not meet two (2) or more of the CAEP Standards. In a case where accreditation is revoked or denied, the EPP can begin the application process after one (1) year from the date of the final decision.

(c) Areas for Improvement (AFI)

AFIs indicate areas which must be improved by the time of the next accreditation visit. Progress reports on remediation of AFIs are submitted as part of the Annual Report. AFIs not remediated by a subsequent site visit may become stipulations.

(d) Stipulations

Stipulations describe serious deficiencies in meeting CAEP Standards and/or components and must be brought into compliance in order to continue accreditation. All stipulations and relevant evidence are reviewed by the Accreditation Council. Failure to correct the condition leading to the stipulation results in probation or revocation of accreditation.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policy 5.14 revised). April 3, 2018 (Accreditation Council Policy Committee & Policy 5.14 revised). February 26, 2018 (Policy 5.14 revised).

### Policy 5.15 Adverse Actions

CAEP's adverse actions are denial of accreditation if an EPP has not previously been accredited by CAEP and revocation of accreditation if an EPP is currently CAEP-accredited or has maintained continuous accreditation through one of the two legacy organizations (NCATE or TEAC).

Adverse action may be taken by a majority vote of Councilors present at any duly convened meeting of the Accreditation Council, upon a motion from the ARM Committee or Executive Committee, under the following circumstances:

- Findings from a site visit or CAEP's review of an annual report reveal that an EPP no longer meets two (2) or more CAEP Standards, NCATE Standards or TEAC quality principles.
- An EPP does not come into compliance with CAEP Standards (e.g., address a stipulation) within the specified time frame.
- Investigation into a valid complaint indicates that any CAEP Standard, NCATE Standard, or TEAC quality principle are no longer being met.
- An EPP no longer demonstrates adequate capacity to maintain and administer its programs and/or is no longer in "good standing" with national, regional, or state accreditation agencies.
- An EPP falsely reports data, fails to correct misleading or inaccurate statements, and/or plagiarizes information submitted for accreditation purposes.
- An EPP fails to submit a complete Annual Report within the requirements established in Policy 6.01.
- An accredited EPP fails to come into compliance with CAEP policies (e.g., non-payment of fees) within thirty (30) days of receiving notice of noncompliance.

**History of Substantive Changes:** June 7, 2019 (Policy 5.15 amended to clarify the Council's enforcement of NCATE and TEAC continuing accreditation); February 26, 2018 (Policy 5.15 revised).

### Policy 5.16 Notification of Accreditation Decisions

#### (a) Notification to EPP

CAEP notifies an EPP of its accreditation decision in a formal hard copy letter from the CAEP President. The letter includes the accreditation decision and term of accreditation as well as specific information about any AFIs and/or stipulations. The letter is sent to the head administrator of the EPP and the chief executive officer as identified by the EPP.

#### (b) Notification of Probation

CAEP notifies EPPs of probation in a certified hard copy letter from the CAEP President. The letter is sent to the head administrator of the EPP and the chief executive officer. Notice will be provided to the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agency at the same time notice of the decision is given to the EPP, but no later than thirty (30) days after the decision is reached. The EPP's site team are also notified of the EPP's accreditation decision.

The EPP may provide comments with regard to the decision, that become part of the official notification of decision to other external parties.

#### (c) Notification of Denial or Revocation

Within thirty (30) days of taking adverse action, CAEP notifies the EPP in writing through certified mail and provides a justification for the decision, as well as information about the EPP's right to appeal the decision. The letter is sent to the head administrator of the EPP and the chief executive officer. Notice will be provided to the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agency at the same time notice of the decision is given to the EPP, but no later



than thirty (30) days after the decision is reached. The EPP's site team are also notified of the EPP's accreditation decision.

Within fifteen (15) days of receiving notification of the adverse action, an EPP may inform CAEP in writing of its intention to request an appeal. The EPP may provide comments with regard to the decision, that become part of the official notification of decision to other external parties.

In all cases, the EPP must meet criteria for appeal, and the burden of proof rests with the EPP. Policies governing the appeals process are contained in the Appeals Policy.

(d) Notification to State

The written notice CAEP provides regarding accreditation decisions, made in accordance with the requirements of Federal regulations (34 CFR Part 602), as described below, includes notice to the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agency. Specifically, such notice will be provided no later than thirty (30) days following a decision to award initial or continuing accreditation.

Within thirty (30) days of receiving notification from an EPP that the EPP has decided to withdraw voluntarily from accreditation, or to let its accreditation lapse, CAEP will provide the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agency with written notice.

State licensing or authorizing agency representatives, and any other state-level representatives that are a party to a state partnership agreement with CAEP, are given prior notice of the upcoming review of any EPP covered by the state partnership agreement, consistent with the Third-Party Comment provisions, above. At any point up to six (6) weeks before a scheduled site visit, comments and information may be provided by the state for consideration as part of the accreditation review. EPPs will be given an opportunity to respond to any such comments prior to the site visit.

(e) Notification to Other External Parties

CAEP provides written notice of its accreditation decisions in accordance with the requirements of Federal regulations (34 CFR Part 602). This includes providing notice of each decision of the Accreditation Council and Appeals Council to the following individuals and entities:

- (1) United States Secretary of Education (or relevant government agency for international EPPs);
- (2) Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA);
- (3) Appropriate accrediting agencies, including national, regional, and specialized accrediting agencies;
- (4) Relevant state affiliates of the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT); and
- (5) Other state entities or agencies which are parties to a state partnership agreement with CAEP.

In the event of a final decision to deny or terminate accreditation, CAEP's public notice will include a brief statement summarizing the reasons for the adverse action, along with the official comments, if any, that the affected EPP may make with regard to the decision, or evidence that the affected EPP has been offered the opportunity to provide official comment.

An EPP's accreditation status is a matter of public record. CAEP posts information about accredited EPPs on its website.

**History of Other Substantive Changes - Section V:** December 7, 2018 (Section V revised). February 26, 2018 (Section V revised).

## SECTION VI. MAINTAINING ACCREDITATION

There are several annual activities required to maintain an active initial or continuing accreditation status. These actions include submitting an Annual Report, advising CAEP of substantive changes, payment of annual fees, and notifying CAEP of loss of state and/or national/regional accreditation and/or approval.

### Policy 6.01 Annual Report

An EPP must submit a complete Annual Report to maintain accreditation or accreditation-eligibility. The report is opened for data entry each year in January. EPPs are given ninety (90) days from the date of system availability to complete the report.

CAEP collects and applies the data from the Annual Report to:

- Monitor whether the EPP continues to meet the CAEP Standards (or NCATE Standards or TEAC Quality Principles, as applicable) between site visits.
- Review and analyze evidence the EPP is remediating stipulations and AFIs.
- Monitor reports of substantive changes.
- Collect completer data, including for distance learning programs.
- Monitor how the EPP publicly reports candidate performance data and other consumer information on its website.

Failure to submit an Annual Report containing all required information will be reviewed by the ARM Committee who may recommend adverse action or lapse of eligibility to the Accreditation Council.

**History of Substantive Changes:** June 7, 2019 (Policy 5.15 amended to clarify the Council's enforcement of NCATE and TEAC continuing accreditation and to require EPP submission of a complete annual report); February 26, 2018 (Policy 6.01 revised).

### Policy 6.02 Substantive Changes

(Note: The requirements of this section stem from and are aligned with U.S. Department of Education regulations)

CAEP, in accordance with Federal regulation (34 CFR Part 602 Subpart B (§602.22)), requires an EPP to inform CAEP of any changes to the educational mission, program, or programs of the EPP which may adversely affect the capacity of the EPP to continue to meet CAEP's standards. These changes must be communicated as part of the Annual Report or in a separate communication to the CAEP President, addressed to [president@caepnet.org](mailto:president@caepnet.org) or the current mailing address for the organization.

- (a) CAEP has the responsibility to determine what effect, if any, substantive changes would have on an EPP's accreditation. Per the U.S. Department of Education Regulations (quoted below), CAEP minimally requires notification in case of the following substantive changes:
  - (1) Any change in the established mission or objectives of the EPP.
  - (2) Any change in the legal status, form of control, or ownership of the EPP.

- (3) Addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure from the existing offerings of educational programs, or method of delivery, from those that were offered when CAEP last evaluated the EPP.
- (4) A contract with other providers for direct instructional services, including any teach-out agreements.
- (5) The addition of programs of study at a degree or credential level different from that which is included in the EPP's current accreditation or pre-accreditation.
- (6) A change from clock hours to credit hours.
- (7) A substantial increase in the number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program.
- (8) If CAEP's accreditation of an institution enables the institution to seek eligibility to participate in title IV, HEA programs, the entering into a contract under which an institution or organization not certified to participate in the title IV, HEA programs offers more than twenty-five (25) percent of one or more of the accredited institution's educational programs.
  - i. If the agency's accreditation of an institution enables it to seek eligibility to participate in title IV, HEA programs, the establishment of an additional location at which the institution offers at least fifty (50) percent of an educational program. The addition of such a location must be approved by the agency in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section unless the accrediting agency determines, and issues a written determination stating that the institution has—
    - Successfully completed at least one cycle of accreditation of maximum length offered by the agency and one renewal, or has been accredited for at least ten years;
    - At least three additional locations that the agency has approved; and
    - Met criteria established by the agency indicating sufficient capacity to add additional locations without individual prior approvals, including at a minimum satisfactory evidence of a system to ensure quality across a distributed enterprise that includes—
      - Clearly identified academic control;
      - Regular evaluation of the locations;
      - Adequate faculty, facilities, resources, and academic and student support systems;
      - Financial stability; and
      - Long-range planning for expansion.
  - ii. The agency's procedures for approval of an additional location, pursuant to paragraph (a)(2)(viii)(A) of this section, must require timely reporting to the agency of every additional location established under this approval.
  - iii. Each agency determination or redetermination to preapprove an institution's addition of locations under paragraph (a)(2)(viii)(A) of this section may not exceed five years.
  - iv. The agency may not preapprove an institution's addition of locations under paragraph (a)(2)(viii)(A) of this section after the institution undergoes a change in

ownership resulting in a change in control as defined in 34 CFR 600.31 until the institution demonstrates that it meets the conditions for the agency to preapprove additional locations described in this paragraph.

- v. The agency must have an effective mechanism for conducting, at reasonable intervals, visits to a representative sample of additional locations approved under paragraph (a)(2)(viii)(A) of this section.
  - The acquisition of any other institution or any program or location of another institution.
  - The addition of a permanent location at a site at which the institution is conducting a teach-out for students of another institution that has ceased operating before all students have completed their program of study.

(9) Any change that means the EPP no longer meets CAEP Standards or adheres to CAEP policies.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policy 6.02 revised)

### Policy 6.03 Annual Fee

CAEP requires the payment of an annual fee which is established by the CAEP Board of Directors. EPPs delinquent in payment of fees are referred to the ARM Committee who may recommend adverse action or lapse of eligibility to the Accreditation Council.

**History of Substantive Changes:** February 26, 2018 (Policy 6.03 revised).

### Policy 6.04 Information from Other Accreditors

CAEP reviews concerns raised about an EPP by national and regional institutional accreditors and may request a report from those entities that describes the nature of the issues and/or schedule a site visit. Based on the review of the report, the Accreditation Council may take action, including adverse action, regarding the EPP's accreditation status with CAEP.

**History of Substantive Changes:** February 26, 2018 (Policy 6.04 revised). October 27, 2017 (Policy 6.04 revised).

### Policy 6.05 Withdrawal or Lapse of Accreditation

An EPP has the right to withdraw from the accreditation process at any time by submitting a letter of withdrawal from the EPP administrator (e.g., President, Provost, Chief Academic Officer) to the CAEP President. The EPP's accreditation is terminated on the date that the letter of withdrawal is received by CAEP unless a date of withdrawal is enumerated in the letter. The EPP will be charged for any expense already incurred by CAEP (including, but not limited to, site team travel) at the time of the withdraw.

When an EPP fails to submit its self-study report or to host the site visit as scheduled without having requested, and had approved a good cause extension (see Policy 6.07 Good Cause Extension), CAEP deems it as a lapse of accreditation, which is a de facto withdrawal as of the end of the accreditation term.

If an EPP notifies CAEP of intent to withdraw after an adverse action by the Accreditation Council, the adverse action remains the final accreditation decision granted by the Accreditation Council.

Within thirty (30) days of the effective date of an EPP's withdrawal or lapse of accreditation, CAEP will adhere to Policy 5.16.

**History of Substantive Changes:** February 26, 2018 (Policy 6.05 revised).

### Policy 6.06 Modification of Schedule for State

States with CAEP agreements may, in consultation with the EPP, request a site visit schedule modification to ensure alignment of CAEP and state review cycles.

**History of Substantive Changes:** February 26, 2018 (Policy 6.06 revised).

### Policy 6.07 Good Cause Extension

CAEP reserves the right to approve or deny requests for Good Cause Extension. The EPP must provide sufficient justification to demonstrate need for an extension. CAEP reserves the right to adjust the length of the extension based on the nature of the request.

#### (a) Request for a Good Cause Extension

An EPP may submit a request in-full for an extension of the term of its accreditation no earlier than twenty-four (24) months and no later than twelve (12) months prior to the EPP's site visit semester.

An EPP may request an extension from CAEP from the term of its accreditation (and delay a site visit) for good cause for a period of up to one (1) semester; or up to two (2) years in consultation with the state/country partner. Extensions may not exceed two (2) years. Any extension request for longer than a period of one (1) year must be approved by the Annual Report Monitoring (ARM) Committee and the Accreditation Council.

An administrative fee will be applied to all good cause extension applications. The fee will cover the administrative costs associated with the extension.

Decisions regarding requests for good cause extension of an accreditation term will be based on one or more of the following factors:

- (1) State or federal standards or legislation requiring significant programmatic change.
- (2) Substantive changes – see Policy 6.02 Substantive Changes.
- (3) Other extenuating circumstances, such as an Act of God, natural disaster, or civil unrest.

The EPP must provide evidence of the factor(s) preventing accreditation-related activities.

As a general rule, requests for more than one (1) extension within an accreditation cycle will be denied. In extenuating circumstances, CAEP will consider such requests on a case-by-case basis.

If a Good Cause Extension is granted, the term of accreditation granted through the subsequent review will be reduced by the length of the extension. For example, upon the expiration of a one-year (1) extension, the EPP's next term of accreditation will be shortened by one (1) year.

(b) Good Standing

An EPP in good standing may request an extension under the factors described in Policy 6.07(a). An EPP not in good standing may only apply for an extension under factors described in 6.07(a)(3). An EPP with an unresolved stipulation is considered not in good standing.

(c) Impact to Site Visit

The EPP will be charged for any expense already incurred by CAEP (including but not limited to site team travel) at the time a Good Cause Extension is requested and granted.

(d) State or Country Agreement

The state/country must concur with the EPP's request for Good Cause Extension. If the state/country does not concur, the extension will not be granted. Documentation of state/country support must be submitted with the request for an extension.

(e) Public Information

Extensions granted to EPPs will be published in accordance with – Section VIII Consumer Information, Public Disclosure, and Transparency.

### Policy 6.08 Mergers and Separations

(a) Merger of two CAEP-Accredited Institutions

When two CAEP-accredited institutions merge, the next CAEP visit is scheduled to coincide with the EPP whose accreditation cycle expires first, pending approval of the state or national partner.

(b) Inclusion of Acquired Programs

When a CAEP-accredited EPP assumes control of programs that were previously operated by another EPP, the programs will be included in the controlling EPP's next regular accreditation review as if the EPP had developed a new program, regardless of whether the EPP previously operating the program was CAEP-accredited.

(c) Inclusion of Acquired Programs at Multiple Levels

When a CAEP-accredited institution assumes control of programs that were within an EPP accredited by CAEP, and the EPP had previously offered programs only at one (1) level (initial-licensure or advanced-level) and the new program will expand its offerings to another level, the situation is analogous to an accredited EPP with a newly developed program at that other level. The next accreditation review will be a combination visit: a continuing visit at the previously accredited level and a first visit at the level of the newly assumed program level.

(d) Accredited Programs Acquired by a Non-Accredited EPP

When a non-accredited EPP assumes control of programs that were previously within a CAEP-accredited EPP, accreditation for the programs can continue to be included in the accreditation of the accredited EPP for up to two (2) years, at the discretion of the accredited EPP and pending approval of the state or national partner. Therefore, if the EPP that previously operated the program allows graduates of the newly transferred program to receive their diplomas from that EPP, those individuals remain graduates of a CAEP-accredited program. In order to retain accreditation, within two (2) years the institution newly in control of the program must submit its application to retain its accreditation.

(e) Separation

When an EPP takes action to separate from a CAEP-accredited EPP, its accreditation may be extended for up to two (2) years to prepare for its first autonomous accreditation visit, pending approval of the state partner. The previously merged EPP completes both phases of the application to CAEP to establish its accreditation eligibility. The site visit will be considered a first accreditation visit.

**History of Substantive Changes:** March 21, 2018 (Policy 6.08 moved to Section X: Administration). February 26, 2018 (Policy 6.08 revised).

### Policy 6.09 Teach-out Plans

CAEP may request and review the teach-out plan and/or teach-out agreement of an EPP either as part of its substantive change report, in relation to merger plans, or as part of a self-study report. Additionally, a teach-out plan request may be initiated by CAEP and subsequently reviewed under the following circumstances:

- The USED, or relevant government agency for international EPPs, initiates an action against an institution or EPP.
- The institutional accreditor withdraws or terminates accreditation.
- The EPP ceases operation.
- A state/country licensing or an authorizing agency revokes the EPP's authorization to provide educational programs.

If CAEP receives recognition from the U. S. Secretary of Education under the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA), CAEP will require an EPP to submit a teach-out plan to CAEP for approval upon the occurrence of any of the following events:

- The Secretary notifies CAEP that the Secretary has initiated an emergency action against the EPP or the institution under whose authority the EPP operates, in accordance with section 487(c)(1)(G) of the HEA, or an action to limit, suspend, or terminate an EPP or institution participating in any title IV, HEA program, in accordance with 487(c)(1)(F) of the HEA, and that a teach-out plan is required.
- CAEP acts to withdraw, terminate, or suspend the accreditation of the EPP.
- The EPP notifies CAEP that it intends to cease operations entirely or close a location that provides one hundred percent of at least one program.
- A state licensing or authorizing agency notifies the agency that an EPP's license or legal authorization to provide an educational program has been or will be revoked.

In reviewing and approving any such plan, CAEP will evaluate the plan to ensure that it provides for the equitable treatment of students, specifies additional charges, if any, and provides for the notification to the students of any additional charges. CAEP may require an EPP to enter into a teach-out agreement as part of its teach-out plan. Upon approval by CAEP of any teach-out plan for an EPP that is accredited by a regional accrediting agency, CAEP will notify that agency of its approval.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policy 6.09 revised).

**History of Other Substantive Changes - Section VI:** February 26, 2018 (Section VI revised).

## SECTION VII. ACCREDITATION VOLUNTEERS

### Policy 7.01 Consistent Interpretation of Standards and Application of CAEP Accreditation Process

CAEP ensures that site visitors and the Accreditation Council apply CAEP's standards through a variety of methods including the following:

- CAEP provides rigorous training to site teams and Accreditation Councilors to ensure CAEP standards are consistently interpreted, evaluated, and supported by evidence.
- The Accreditation Council, as part of its deliberation and review of accreditation decisions, engages in periodic calibration exercises to ensure consistency in decision making and interrater reliability.
- Volunteers participate in a performance review process.

**History of Substantive Changes:** February 26, 2018 (Policy 7.01 revised).

### Policy 7.02 Qualifications and Training of CAEP Volunteers

#### (a) Qualifications

CAEP volunteers who conduct site visits or serve on the governance or decision-making bodies of CAEP are qualified by education and experience in their field(s) of specialization. Volunteers are either self- or member-nominated.

#### (b) Selection

The Selection Committee reviews all applications and recommends a list of nominees for appointment as Accreditation Councilors.

The Annual Report and Monitoring Committee reviews all applications and recommends a list of nominees for appointment as annual report reviewers.

The Site Visit Oversight Committee reviews all applications and recommends a list of nominees for appointment to all other volunteer roles.

#### (c) Training

Formal CAEP-approved training is required of all volunteers involved in the accreditation process. This includes but is not limited to site visitors, lead site visitors, Councilors, and annual report reviewers.

**History of Substantive Changes:** February 26, 2018 (Policy 7.02 revised).

### Policy 7.03 Practitioner Involvement in CAEP

CAEP conducts its activities in a way that involves practitioners throughout the decision-making process. CAEP defines practitioners as professionals who spend the majority of their workweek in schools for preschool through 12th grade students or as administrators of schools and/or school districts. CAEP's bylaws and policies require that volunteers serving in CAEP decision-making and governance bodies include balanced representation of P-12 practitioners, employers, policy makers, and the public.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policy 7.03 revised).



#### Policy 7.04 Code of Ethics

CAEP Accreditation Councilors, site visitors, program reviewers, and annual report reviewers are expected to maintain the highest standards of ethical behavior, which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Conducting oneself professionally, with truth, accuracy, and fairness.
- Not accepting consulting assignments (consistent with Policy 7.08) related to any EPP's accreditation during their term of service or for a year after their service.
- Declaring potential conflicts or competing interests in the accreditation process.
- Maintaining confidences of all parties involved in the accreditation processes and decisions.
- Not communicating information that might compromise the integrity of an accreditation decision.
- Not undertaking accrediting responsibilities for which they have not been trained comprehensively on CAEP's policies, practices, principles, and standards.
- Not showing bias or prejudice against an EPP being reviewed or others involved in the accreditation process.
- Not accepting gifts, bribes, or anything of value that may give the appearance of favor or partiality in any decisions rendered regarding CAEP's affairs, activities, and policies.

**History of Substantive Changes:** February 26, 2018 (Policy 7.04 revised). September 29, 2017 (Policy 7.04 revised).

#### Policy 7.05 Conflict of Interest

CAEP Accreditation Councilors, site visitors, program reviewers, and annual report reviewers are expected to maintain relationships and practices in their CAEP activities that do not demonstrate conflicts of interest. They conduct CAEP business, including their private business and financial affairs that might impinge upon CAEP, in a manner that can withstand the sharpest scrutiny by those who would seek to find conflicts and, thus, they exclude themselves from CAEP activities for any reason that may represent an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

(a) Non-Exhaustive List of Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest include the following:

- (1) Currently employed by an EPP under review.
- (2) Having been employed by or under consideration for employment at the EPP under review in the last ten (10) years as a staff, faculty, or administrator.
- (3) Having been a consultant at the EPP being reviewed within the past ten (10) years.
- (4) Serving on or having served within the last five (5) years on a statewide or national decision-making board or committee that considered an EPP under review.
- (5) Serving as a CAEP staff member within the last seven (7) years.
- (6) Participating in a common consortium or special research relationship with an EPP under review.
- (7) Having jointly authored research or literature with a faculty member at the EPP under review.
- (8) Having an immediate family member attending or employed by the EPP or institution/organization or being considered for employment at the EPP or institution/organization under review.

- (9) Having advised a doctoral candidate who is now a member of faculty of the EPP under review.
- (10) Having served as a commencement speaker, received an honorary degree from the institution, or otherwise profited or appeared to benefit from service to the institution or the EPP under review.
- (11) Affiliation with another accreditor or purveyor of standards which are competitive to the Initial-Licensure or Advanced-Level CAEP Standards.

If an EPP by which a CAEP volunteer is employed or with which the volunteer has a conflict is under review (beginning with program review and ending with notification of final decision), the volunteer must refrain from any communication with other CAEP volunteers regarding the EPP through the entirety of the EPP's accreditation process.

(b) Personal Agendas

CAEP Accreditation Councilors, site visitors, and other CAEP volunteers do not advance personal agendas in the conduct of accreditation business by applying personal or partisan interpretations of CAEP policies. They exclude themselves from participating in CAEP activities if, to their knowledge, there is some predisposing factor that could prejudice them with respect to CAEP's affairs, activities, or policies.

(c) Compensation or Gifts

CAEP Accreditation Councilors, site visitors, and other CAEP volunteers do not request or accept any compensation or gifts of substance from an EPP being reviewed or anyone affiliated with the EPP. Gifts of substance would include briefcases, tickets to athletic or entertainment events, and so forth. Small tokens such as key chains, magnets, or cups may be presented to site visitors if appropriate to an EPP culture.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policy 7.05 revised). October 27, 2017 (Policy 7.05 revised).

### Policy 7.06 Harassment

CAEP maintains and fosters an environment in which all volunteers are treated with decency and respect. Therefore, CAEP prohibits discrimination and all forms of harassment, including but not limited to sexual harassment. This means that no form of discriminatory or harassing conduct towards any volunteer, employee, EPP, or other person will be tolerated. CAEP is committed to enforcing this at all levels within CAEP, and any volunteer who engages in discrimination or harassment will be subject to immediate removal from volunteer activities.

All investigations of harassment claims are conducted by the Compliance Officer and in alignment with Section IX Complaints.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policy 7.06 revised). February 26, 2018 (Policy 7.06 revised).

### Policy 7.07 Confidentiality

CAEP Accreditation Councilors and site visitors have access to sensitive information in order to conduct accreditation visits and make accreditation decisions and must protect the confidentiality of this

information. Specifically, these individuals must treat as confidential all elements of the work of the Accreditation Council and site visits. They should share information and perceptions with discipline and care and not publicly discuss the particulars of Accreditation Council or site visit deliberations.

**History of Substantive Changes:** February 26, 2018 (Policy 7.07 revised).

### Policy 7.08 Consulting

Councilors and site visitors may engage in consultative, informational, or collegial activities with an EPP seeking CAEP accreditation. Councilors and site visitors must disclose they do not represent CAEP and will not vote on matters pertaining to the EPP. Councilors and site visitors may not market their position as a Councilor or site visitor for financial or inappropriate personal or professional gain while actively serving and for a year after their service.

**History of Substantive Changes:** September 29, 2017 (Policy 7.08 revised).

### Policy 7.09 Observers on Site Teams and Site Visits

Observers on a site visit may attend activities held jointly between the EPP and site team. Observers may not participate in site team deliberations and must maintain the confidentiality of all discussions and documents viewed. Observers may include:

- Representatives appointed from national, country, or local government agencies identified in state or international partnership agreements;
- One representative from the state affiliates of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) or the National Education Association (NEA), in the United States; and/or
- CAEP staff.

An EPP can contest the assignment of an observer if it can demonstrate a real or perceived conflict of interest exists.

(a) Role of NEA or AFT on Site Teams

The representatives from NEA or AFT state affiliates serve as observers on the site visit and must be actively engaged in school activities at the pre-collegiate level (including but not limited to elementary or secondary teacher, or administrator).

The NEA or AFT affiliate is responsible for the costs of their respective observer or state representative.

(b) Role of International Representatives on Site Teams

The international agency may recommend representatives for appointment which must meet all appropriate qualifications for service as set forth in CAEP's Policy 7.02. The representative from the international agency serves as a state/international consultant to the team, providing country context and clarifying country requirements. The international representative is a full participant in discussions and data gathering for the site visit, but is not a voting member of the site team.

The country agency is responsible for the costs of their observer or representative.

(c) Role of State-Appointed Site Visitor on Site Teams

The role of the state representative on the site team is defined in the CAEP state agreement. In either concurrent or joint visits, the state representative can serve in the role of:

- (1) State-Appointed Site Visitor who is a full participant in discussions and data gathering for the site visit and is a voting member of the site team. The state-appointed site visitor is trained by CAEP as a national site visitor and must adhere to all policies relevant to site visitors. Costs for participation in the site visit are covered by the state.
- (2) State Consultant who is a full participant in discussions and data gathering for the site visit, but is not a voting member of the site team. The state consultant is not required to receive CAEP training, and costs for participation in the site visit are covered by the state.

(d) Role of CAEP Staff on Site Visits

At CAEP's discretion, staff may be assigned to attend a site visit. In any such instance, the role of staff is to support the site visit team in their work and to provide interpretation of CAEP Policies. Staff at site visits do not participate in the writing of the site visit report, other than providing grammatical and policy background, and do not provide input on or vote on the recommendations of the team for areas for improvement or stipulation.

CAEP is responsible for the costs of their observer or representative.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policy 7.09(d) revised). February 26, 2018 (Policy 7.09 revised). September 29, 2017 (Policies 7.09(f-g) revised).

### Policy 7.10 Site Visitors' Responsibilities and Authority

(a) Terms

Individuals who serve as site visitors are initially elected to a three (3) year term and are expected to accept an assignment for at least one (1) site visit per year. They may be re-elected for an unlimited number of consecutive three (3) year terms.

(b) Training

Prior to participating in an accreditation review, site visitors must successfully complete training in the application of CAEP Standards. To stay current and apply standards consistently, site visitors are expected to participate regularly in CAEP's training on the CAEP Standards, the CAEP accreditation process, and policy or procedural changes. All site visitors must demonstrate they qualify to be a site visitor based on requirements put forward by CAEP.

(c) Authority

The authority of the site team is to assess the quality of the evidence provided by the EPP and recommend AFIs and/or stipulations as warranted under any of the CAEP Standards.

(d) Responsibilities

CAEP site visitors are expected to participate fully in the accreditation review, to perform their assignments thoroughly and in a timely manner, and to assume full responsibility for all background preparation required to conduct an accreditation review. Site visitor responsibilities include the following:

- (1) Understand and follow policies outlined in Section V.
- (2) Review the self-study report and evidence submitted by the EPP and formulate a plan for verifying accuracy of the information provided.

- (3) Provide written feedback and requests for clarification and additional evidence as needed.
- (4) Review supplemental evidence submitted by the EPP.
- (5) Provide written analysis of evidence and suggestions for citing AFIs and/or stipulations, as appropriate and in collaboration with the site team.
- (6) Participate fully in the formative evaluation process and the site visit as appropriate.
- (7) Complete assignments in a timely manner.
- (8) Respond to requests from CAEP staff and the lead site visitor in a timely manner.
- (9) Refrain from recommending, reporting, or communicating to the EPP whether or not the EPP meets standards.
- (10) Remain accessible and responsive to CAEP as directed leading up to the Accreditation Council decision, including participation in the Accreditation Council Panel review if needed.
- (11) Retain written notes in a safe and secure location until the accreditation decision is rendered.
- (12) Participate in a minimum of one (1) accreditation review per year.
- (13) Adhere to the CAEP Code of Ethics and policies on conflict of interest and confidentiality.

(e) Removal from Volunteer Pool

A site visitor may be removed from the CAEP volunteer pool at any time. A site visitor may be removed for cause, including failure to adhere to Accreditation Policy or the CAEP code of conduct and policies regarding confidentiality and conflicts of interest. In the event of an alleged breach of policy, conflict of interest, or other inappropriate conduct, the CAEP president, in consultation with the designated CAEP compliance officer, will review all available evidence and make a decision on removal. Accreditation system access is revoked immediately upon removal. The Site Visit Oversight Committee of the Accreditation Council approves all removals from the pool.

(f) Removal from a Site Team

(1) Removal for Cause

CAEP may remove a site visitor from any site team assignment at any time for cause, including failure to adhere to Accreditation Policy or not fulfilling the responsibilities of their role (e.g., completing reports or responding to requests in a timely manner). Site visitors may also be removed from a site visit pending the investigation of a complaint in which they are implicated. If the EPP to which a site team is assigned has any serious concerns regarding the conduct of a site visitor, a formal complaint and request for removal, if applicable, should be submitted in accordance with Accreditation Policy Section IX on complaints.

In the case of a removal of a site visitor for cause, the EPP is notified of the removal.

The Chair, Vice Chair and Site Visit Oversight Committee of the Accreditation Council are notified and provided with the reason for removal.

(2) Removal not for Cause

CAEP may adjust the size or composition of a site team without cause at any point prior to the scheduled formative feedback meeting. If removal of a site visitor is needed after this point in time, it will be conducted in consultation with the President and Vice President.

The EPP is notified of the removal within five (5) days.

(g) Resignation

Site visitors may resign at any time by written notice to CAEP staff or the Chair of the Accreditation Council. The resignation shall be effective at the time specified in the notice, or upon receipt if no time is specified. Acceptance of a resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. Accreditation system access is revoked immediately upon resignation.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policies 7.10(a), 7.10(e), and 7.10(f) revised). February 26, 2018 (Policy 7.10 revised).

## SECTION VIII. CONSUMER INFORMATION, PUBLIC DISCLOSURE, AND TRANSPARENCY

### Policy 8.01 Consumer Information

CAEP requires accredited EPPs to provide consumer information to the public, including candidate performance data. Title II data must be publicly available on the EPP's website.

### Policy 8.02 Public Disclosure

In addition to its requirements for the disclosure and transparency of EPP consumer information, CAEP makes the following information available to the public:

- Procedures that EPPs must follow in applying for accreditation.
- CAEP Standards and processes used to determine accreditation status and term of accreditation.
- The names, employment, and representation of the members of the Board of Directors, Accreditation Council, Appeals Committee, and CAEP staff.
- A list of EPPs accredited by CAEP, including their accreditation decision, term of accreditation, the semester of the next site visit, and degree/certification levels, unmet CAEP Standards, and stipulations for both met and unmet standards.

### Policy 8.03 Accreditation Action Report

Upon written request, and after the final decision, the Accreditation Action report can be made available to appropriate state and federal agencies and officials.

**History of Substantive Changes:** February 26, 2018 (Policy 8.03 revised).

### Policy 8.04 Representation of Accreditation to the Public

When representing its accreditation to the public, an EPP must report the accreditation decision accurately, including the specific licensure level covered by the accreditation, and the address and telephone number of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation as provided on the

CAEP website. The official statement to be publicly displayed on the EPP's website is provided by CAEP following Accreditation Council action, as defined by the CAEP Communication Guidelines.

CAEP staff periodically review EPP statements of accreditation to ensure the accuracy of representation. If CAEP becomes aware that an EPP is not accurately reporting its accreditation to the public, the EPP will be contacted and directed to issue a corrective communication. Failure to correct misleading or inaccurate statements may lead to adverse action.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policy 8.04 revised).

### Policy 8.05 Misleading or Incorrect Statements

The EPP is responsible for the adequacy and accuracy of all information submitted by the EPP for accreditation purposes, including program reviews, self-study reports, formative feedback reports and addendums and site visit report responses, and information made available to prospective candidates and the public. In particular, information displayed by the EPP pertaining to its accreditation and Title II decision, term, consumer information, or candidate performance (e.g., standardized test results, job placement rates, and licensing examination rates) must be accurate and current.

When CAEP becomes aware that an accredited EPP has misrepresented any action taken by CAEP with respect to the EPP and/or its accreditation or uses accreditation reports or materials in a false or misleading manner, the EPP will be contacted and directed to issue a corrective communication. Failure to correct misleading or inaccurate statements may lead to adverse action.

## SECTION IX. COMPLAINTS

CAEP reviews carefully any allegations that an accredited EPP has fallen out of compliance with accreditation standards or policies or that CAEP has not followed its own policies.

### Policy 9.01 Complaints against a CAEP-Accredited EPP

CAEP does not intervene in the internal procedures of an EPP, nor does it perform as a regulatory body or grievance-resolving body for an EPP. However, complaints by a third-party, which pertain to an EPP accredited by CAEP or to CAEP itself, shall be reviewed in accordance with CAEP's policies.

(a) Submission of Complaints

CAEP accepts only written complaints against an EPP where the complainant is identified and his or her relationship to the EPP is disclosed. The complaint must be sent to the CAEP Compliance Officer at the street address provided on the CAEP website or to [compliance.officer@caepnet.org](mailto:compliance.officer@caepnet.org).

(b) Required Information

Written complaints against an EPP must include the following information:

- (1) A statement of facts and circumstances showing:
  - i. Noncompliance with CAEP's policies or standards by an accredited EPP;
  - ii. Actions by an accredited EPP that may jeopardize an EPP's accreditation; and

- iii. A complaint that is not an individual grievance unrelated to CAEP's mission as an accrediting agency.
- (2) A reference to the particular CAEP policies or standards at issue in the complaint.
- (3) A statement of the actions, if any, that the complainant and/or the EPP have taken to address the matters identified in the complaint.
- (4) Documentation of the dates of the events that led to the complaint.

CAEP will not investigate complaints based on events that began more than two (2) years prior to the filing of a formal complaint.

(c) Review of Complaints

Complaints against an EPP are first reviewed by the CAEP Compliance Officer, or a designee, to determine relevance and pertinence to the CAEP Standards or policies. After the relevance is established, the Accreditation Council forwards the complaint to the Complaint Review Committee for investigation and a recommendation for further action by the Accreditation Council. The complainant and the EPP are notified of the actions taken at each step of the complaint process. All complaints are reviewed during the twice-annual meetings of the Accreditation Council.

If the complaint is found not relevant, the CAEP President will respond to the complainant.

### Policy 9.02 Complaints against CAEP

Formal complaints made against CAEP, CAEP staff, CAEP site visitors, the Accreditation Council, or the Appeals Council are to be addressed to the Compliance Officer for investigation as provided for in the CAEP Governance Policy.

## SECTION X. ADMINISTRATION

### Policy 10.01 CAEP Authority to Postpone Activities

Notwithstanding the approval or denial of any request made by an EPP for a Good Cause Extension (0), CAEP reserves the authority to postpone any EPP site visit and/or the presentation of an EPP's case to the Accreditation Council.

(a) Postponement of a Site Visit or Review

CAEP may postpone the site visit or review of any EPP if CAEP becomes aware of any issue that, in CAEP's determination, poses a threat to the quality, integrity, or safety of a scheduled site visit or review or is likely to result in a site visit or review that is not able to be carried out in full accordance with this Policy and/or established procedures. The failure of CAEP, including the site team, to meet established deadlines may be cause for postponement. However, there shall be no postponement if the threat or challenge is the result of any action or inaction on the part of the EPP. A postponed site visit or review will be rescheduled to take place as soon as is feasible following resolution of the issue(s) that led to the postponement.

(b) Postponement after a Site Visit or Review

CAEP may, following completion of a site visit or review, postpone the accreditation process of any EPP if CAEP becomes aware of any issue that, in CAEP's determination, poses a threat to the integrity of the decision-making process or the inability for that process to be



carried out in full accordance with this Policy and/or established procedures. The failure of CAEP, including any panel of reviewers or the Accreditation Council as a whole, to meet established deadlines may be cause for postponement. However, there shall be no postponement if the threat or challenge is the result of any action or inaction on the part of the EPP. CAEP's exercise of this authority shall result in the postponement of the presentation of the EPP's case to the Accreditation Council until the next scheduled Accreditation Council meeting, or longer if justified.

With any postponement under this policy, if the EPP subject to postponement is accredited by NCATE, TEAC, or CAEP, the term of accreditation may be extended only with the approval of the Accreditation Council on a recommendation of the ARM committee. The EPP must remain in good standing or be subject to adverse action.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policies 10.01 (a-b) revised).

### Policy 10.02 Authority to Waive Accreditation Policy

CAEP reserves the authority to grant any EPP or group of EPPs a waiver from one or more requirements established in this Accreditation Policy or prior versions of the Accreditation Policy, as applicable. A waiver may be granted only upon the written approval of the CAEP President and subject to any terms or conditions provided therein. No waiver may be approved if any portion of it would result in a change in any decision of the Accreditation Council or any deviation from the decision definitions provided for in Policy 5.14.

At the meeting immediately following the exercise of this authority, CAEP will report to the Accreditation Council and the CAEP Board of Directors.

### Policy 10.03 Recommendation for Reconsideration

For any accreditation decision other than an adverse action (defined in [Policy 5.14](#)), the CAEP President may recommend Accreditation Council reconsideration of the EPP's most recent accreditation decision. The Accreditation Council, with a two-thirds vote of Councilors present at a duly convened meeting, may change the accreditation status of an EPP. This applies only in one of the following circumstances:

(a) Petition for the Application of Subsequent Policy

An EPP may file a petition with CAEP presenting evidence to support its assertion that a different accreditation status decision would have been reached if a subsequent version of the Accreditation Policy had been applied. The state/country must concur with the EPP's request.

(b) Procedural Challenge

CAEP may recommend reconsideration of any decision of the Accreditation Council if there is credible evidence the policies or processes of the Accreditation Council were not followed by a review panel or the Accreditation Council.

In either instance, approval of the Accreditation Council is required to change an EPP's accreditation status, upon a motion from a panel assigned to re-review the EPP's decision. A change in status shall not result in an extension of the EPP's term of accreditation past the maximum term length established in Policy 5.14(a). No other remedies or concessions shall be made available to the EPP.

**History of Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Policy 10.03 revised).

**History of Substantive Changes - Section X:** April 3, 2018 (Accreditation Council Policy Committee & Section X revised). March 21, 2018 (Section X added; moved Policies 4.02 and 6.08 into this new section)

**History of Other Substantive Changes:** December 7, 2018 (Entire document revised to remove the word “program” in situations where “provider” was intended; Sections titled “Expectations for Initial Accreditation” and “Petition for Exemption of Advanced-Level Programs” were removed).