



Policy Manual

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Introduction

The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) is a non-governmental, voluntary association of parties committed to the effective preparation of teachers and other P-12 professional educators. Its mission is to advance excellence in educator preparation through evidence-based accreditation that assures quality and supports continuous improvement to strengthen P-12 student learning.

CAEP Policies and Procedures.

The policies in this publication were adopted at the August 2013 meeting of the CAEP Board of Directors and updated in December 2013 meeting to reflect policy clarifications. These policies and related procedures for their implementation are available on the CAEP website (caepnet.org).

CAEP from October 2010 to April 2013.

CAEP was created by the boards of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) in October 2010. Between its inception and the consolidation of CAEP, NCATE, and TEAC on July 1, 2013, CAEP operated with an Interim Board of Directors. The first four educator preparation providers (EPPs) seeking CAEP accreditation hosted their site visits in fall 2012 and winter 2013 and were accredited at the April 2013 meeting of CAEP's Commissions and Accreditation Council.

CAEP Strategic Goals for 2013 through 2016

The following six strategic goal were adopted by the Interim Board of Directors in 2013:

1. **To raise the bar in educator preparation.** CAEP will have clear, high standards that rely on evidence-based measures of performance and continuous improvement to make accurate judgments about educator preparation provider (EPP) quality.
2. **To promote continuous improvement.** CAEP will support educator preparation providers (EPPs) in using the accreditation process to demonstrate quality and facilitate continuous improvement.
3. **To advance research and innovation.** CAEP will develop and implement an agenda for research and innovation to foster continuous improvement in educator preparation.
4. **To increase accreditation's value.** CAEP will broaden awareness of quality educator preparation providers (EPPs) and the value of accreditation based on peer review of relevant, actionable measures of quality so that more providers will participate and more states and districts will rely on accreditation for program approval, licensing, and hiring.
5. **To be a model accrediting body.** CAEP will model excellence and offer multiple pathways to accreditation.
6. **To be a model learning organization.** CAEP will model the self-study and continuous improvement practices it advocates for providers.

National Recognition as an Accreditor

Beginning in the spring of 2013, CAEP initiated a process of applying for recognition from the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for the Accreditation of Higher Education (CHEA) with recognition expected in 2014. In the meantime, educator preparation providers (EPPs) that seek CAEP accreditation also have the option to be reviewed under the NCATE *Standards* or TEAC *Quality Principles*, making them eligible for NCATE or TEAC accreditation as well as CAEP accreditation.

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CAEP Standards

In 2012-2013, a CAEP Commission on Standards and Performance Reporting developed five standards and recommendations on (1) annual reporting and CAEP monitoring and (2) levels of accreditation. Following the review of comments on the draft standards on June 10-11, 2013, the Commission finalized the proposed standards and recommendations for presentation to the CAEP Board of Directors in August 2013. The CAEP Board of Directors adopted these standards and other recommendations by the Commission on August 29, 2013.

Beginning January 1, 2016, all EPPs will be required to respond to these five standards when they submit their self-study reports. Before the spring 2016 self-study report submissions, EPPs may volunteer to pilot the new CAEP standards and accreditation process.

Section One: Policies Related to Educator Preparation Providers

POLICY I Scope of CAEP Accreditation

The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) is a nonprofit organization that accredits educator preparation providers (EPPs) and other organizations involved in the preparation of professional educators. CAEP's work has a dual purpose: (1) to provide the public with assurance about the quality of these professional programs and (2) to promote their continuous improvement. CAEP does this by establishing standards for the preparation of professional educators and accrediting EPPs through a system that examines and verifies an EPP's evidence of program quality and completer performance and its capacity to monitor and improve the quality of their preparation programs for professional educators.

The scope of CAEP's work is the **accreditation of educator preparation providers at the certificate/licensure,¹ associates, bachelor's, master's, post-baccalaureate, and doctoral levels. This includes programs, including distance education programs, offered in the United States and internationally.**

CAEP requires that EPPs present evidence of candidate accomplishment upon which they award the institution's degree and/or upon which they recommend program completers for state licenses or certificates in teaching, administration, and other school professions. The evidence presented must be subject to public scrutiny and validation.

The CAEP review includes all specialty areas that prepare candidates to work in preschool through grade 12² settings and lead to a professional license, certificate, or endorsement; it also includes graduate and non-certification programs for licensed educators who are extending their knowledge and skills for working in school settings. Programs that lead to endorsements, additions, or their equivalent for which its state or country requires national or state program review must be included in the CAEP self-study report.

¹ Certificate/licensure refers to educator recognition and credentialing in the United States.

² Grade levels that are commonly used in the United States; other grade levels may be common outside the United States..

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When an EPP seeks CAEP accreditation, the review by CAEP includes all on-campus, off-campus, distance learning, and alternate route programs, as well as consortia for the preparation of professional educators that are administered by the EPP.

POLICY II CAEP Accreditation Process

CAEP accomplishes its work through the familiar means of self study, a site visit, and peer review. CAEP requires each Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) to conduct a self-study and submit a report in one of three pathways:

1. A **selected improvement self-study** in which evidence shows that all CAEP standards are met and that the EPP is moving significantly toward target levels in one or more standards that indicate that the candidates' professional competence will be improved;
2. An **inquiry brief self-study** in which the EPP presents evidence of candidates' professional competence and its own capacity for program quality that satisfy CAEP standards; and
3. A **transformation initiative self-study** in which, in addition to meeting all CAEP standards, the EPP reports the results of a reform effort it has undertaken that will contribute to the research-base of educator preparation and can ultimately be linked to the candidates' improved professional competence.

Each accreditation pathway requires evidence of a quality assurance system. Each also requires that the evidence submitted by the EPP is organized in a manner that enables the Commissions, the Accreditation Council, or any outside reviewer to determine whether CAEP standards are met. The analysis of the self-study reports is based on the review of available evidence that has been reliably and validly interpreted and requires the demonstration of sufficient capacity to offer quality P-12 educator preparation and the EPP's performance with respect to candidate achievement.

If an EPP considers seeking accreditation for several of its programs through more than one accreditation pathway (SI, IB, TI), it must contact CAEP's President, or designee, to explore available options. Decisions about an EPP seeking accreditation under multiple pathways will be determined collaboratively by the EPP, and CAEP's Senior Vice President. EPPs choosing multiple pathways will submit a separate self-study report for each pathway and host a separate site visit team for each self-study report. The relevant Commission (SI, IB, or TI) will determine whether or not the evidence in each self-study shows standards have been met. The Accreditation Council will consider the evidence related to each self-study and will render a single accreditation decision for the EPP. (See *Policy XXIX: Accreditation Council Responsibilities and Authority*.)

The Self-study Report

Eight months before its site visit, an EPP submits its self-study report to CAEP, which engages the EPP in a formative written evaluation with feedback on its self-study and evidence for making its case for accreditation. CAEP provides guidance to EPPs on the development of their self-study reports through coaching, conferences, workshops, webinars, written guidelines, and other communications.

Formative Evaluation

CAEP supports EPPs as they prepare for initial or continuing accreditation reviews through written guidance that can be accessed online or in CAEP publications, conferences, state or regional workshops, webinars, and sessions at the other national conferences. CAEP staff can be contacted for clarification and advice on the CAEP standards and accreditation processes.

As an EPP prepares for its accreditation review, CAEP will provide written feedback to EPPs on the content and format of their self-study reports and related evidence in relation to the CAEP standards. The written feedback may include recommendations on the methodological design, data analysis, interpretation of the evidence, etc.; it may include components or sections of the self-study report that need validation and may request additional data from the EPP. The formative evaluation may lead to the identification of information to be provided at the site visit as well as specific tasks to be completed. Formative evaluation is based on the initial self-study submission required for the selected accreditation pathway.

An EPP seeking accreditation for the first time may request a formative evaluation of its quality assurance system and other requirements of its selected pathway. It must submit required documentation for review and feedback as well as host a site visit. After an EPP has successfully addressed the expectations of its pathway, it will be declared a candidate for accreditation.

The Site Visit

During the site visit, a CAEP site visit team examines the evidence cited in the self-study report; interviews and reviews surveys 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. By the conclusion of the visit, the site team will have begun drafting a report of its findings, which will be finalized after the visit and submitted to the EPP for its review and response. The site visit report is sent to the appropriate CAEP Commission which will make a recommendation on whether standards have been met.

Accreditation Decisions

At its spring and fall meetings, the relevant CAEP Commission (**Selected** Improvement, Inquiry Brief, or Transformation Initiative Commission) determine whether an EPP meets CAEP standards and identifies any areas for improvement or stipulations in the case. The Commission forwards its recommendation on the case to be considered for accreditation by the Accreditation Council. The Commission's recommendation is based on the EPP's self-study, the site visit team report, and the EPP's response to the report (if any). (*See Policy XXVIII, Commissions' Responsibilities and Authority.*) After considering the self-study report, the site visit team report, the EPP's response to the report, and the Commission's report, the Accreditation Council determines accreditation. (*See Policy XXIX, Accreditation Council Responsibilities and Authority.*) CAEP's accreditation decision-making process is outlined in Appendix A.

Standards

All EPPs must provide evidence that all CAEP Standards for Educator Preparation are adequately addressed and that they regularly collect evidence regarding candidates' content or subject matter knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and skills, professional knowledge and skills, professional dispositions, and accomplishments in relation to state and professional standards; analyze the validity and reliability of the results from the evidence; and use the analysis to improve the quality of their work. Evidence must show that completers are capable of continuing professional growth, using technology in their work, and

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using their knowledge and skills about diversity to help their P-12 students learn. Evidence must also show graduates' success in terms of completing the preparation program, obtaining an appropriate license (where applicable), and, if possible, other measures such as job placement rates, retention rates on the job, and so forth.

EPPs will also address the following seven areas identified by the U.S. Department of Education and related to program capacity: curriculum, program faculty; facilities, equipment, and supplies; fiscal and administrative capacity; student support services; recruiting and admissions practices, academic calendars, catalogs, publications, grading, and advertising; student feedback and complaints.³ If the EPP offers its program in a distance-education format, it must also provide evidence that each of these areas has been examined and evaluated for the distance-education option. (See *Policy XV, Inclusion of Programs in Multiple Sites, including Distance Learning*.)

The EPP's evidence must show that program planning and decisions are based on evidence of candidate learning. All this evidence must be organized in a manner that will enable the Accreditation Council, or any outside reviewer, to determine whether CAEP standards are met.

POLICY III Eligibility

To be eligible for CAEP accreditation, the college or university in which an Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) is located must be accredited by a regional or institutional accrediting agency that is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, the Council on Higher Education Accreditation, or the equivalent in the case of non-U.S. institutions. EPPs that are not eligible for regional/institutional accreditation must provide evidence of capacity as part of their application for eligibility. EPPs in institutions outside the United States must complete requirements outlined in *Policy XIX, Accreditation of EPPs Located outside the United States*. Required eligibility requirements are outlined on CAEP's website (caepnet.org).

An Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) must complete a two-stage eligibility process that can result in approval or denial by the Accreditation Council as either *accreditation eligible* or as a *candidate for accreditation*.

- *Accreditation eligible* is approved for EPPs that demonstrate readiness to engage in the accreditation review to meet all of CAEP's standards. *Accreditation eligible* engages an EPP directly into the accreditation process to meet all CAEP standards within 5 years.
- *Candidacy for accreditation* is approved for EPP's new to accreditation or initiating educator preparation for the first time. *Candidacy for accreditation* engages an EPP in a development/diagnostic process for up to 5 years in order to establish eligibility to meet all of CAEP's standards.

EPPs are notified that they are *accreditation eligible* or a *candidate for accreditation* and invoiced for annual dues for the year in which they are accepted. They are expected to host a site visit to achieve accreditation status within five years of establishing eligibility. If an EPP that

³ In cases where an international institution cannot comply with one of the capacity elements, it will need to provide a justification of why this cannot be done in the national context. The justification should be made at the time of the EPP's application for CAEP accreditation. CAEP staff will determine if other information must be submitted to address the identified capacity element.

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is either accreditation eligible or a candidate for accreditation does not host an accreditation or developmental/diagnostic visit within five years, the EPP must resubmit its application and be reconsidered for approval of eligibility or candidacy. If the Accreditation Council denies an EPP either candidacy or accreditation eligibility, the EPP can seek reconsideration through the Annual Report and Monitoring Committee.

POLICY IV Accreditation Status and Term

The accreditation of an EPP will be determined by the Accreditation Council at its semiannual meeting. The accreditation decisions that can be granted for initial and continuing accreditation are described below. The term of accreditation begins when the Accreditation Council accredits the EPP and extends to the Council's next accreditation decision.

Initial Accreditation

EPPs seeking accreditation for the first time or after a lapse of accreditation (see *Policy X, Withdrawal or Lapse of Accreditation*) will be awarded one of the following accreditation decisions by CAEP's Accreditation Council:

- Accreditation⁴ for 5-7 years, depending on the state partnership agreement;
- Exemplary or "gold" accreditation for 5-7 years, depending on the state partnership agreement; or
- Denial of accreditation

To be awarded accreditation, an EPP must meet all of the CAEP standards. An EPP that is awarded exemplary or "gold" accreditation must meet all of the CAEP standards and surpass a combination of standards; this designation will be awarded to a small number of providers. An EPP is denied accreditation if it fails to meet one or more of the CAEP standards.

Continuing Accreditation

All accredited EPPs must undergo a reevaluation to determine that they continue to meet the CAEP standards prior to the end of their term of accreditation. EPPs seeking reaccreditation will be awarded one of the following accreditation decisions by CAEP's Accreditation Council:

- Accreditation⁴ for 5-7 years, depending on the state partnership agreement;
- Exemplary or "gold" accreditation for 5-7 years, depending on the state partnership agreement;
- Probationary accreditation; or
- Revocation of accreditation

To be awarded accreditation, an EPP must meet all of the CAEP standards. An EPP that is awarded exemplary or "gold" accreditation must meet all of the CAEP standards and surpass a combination of standards; this designation will be awarded to a small number of providers. Probationary accreditation is awarded to EPPs that meet or surpass all but one of the CAEP standards. An EPP's accreditation is revoked if it does not meet CAEP guidelines in two or more standards.

⁴ Accreditation for 5-7 years may be granted with identified areas for improvement..

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An EPP with probationary accreditation must present evidence within two years that the CAEP guidelines for all unmet standards have been met to be granted accreditation for an additional five years. Otherwise the EPP returns to candidate status. EPPs for which a stipulation has been cited will be granted probationary accreditation and must successfully remove that stipulation within two years to maintain its accreditation for an additional five years. Stipulations require documentation for removal.

Accreditation terms may be extended per *Policy XVII, Good Cause Extension*.

POLICY V Notification of Accreditation Decisions

Within thirty (30) days of the accreditation decision, CAEP notifies the EPP in writing of its accreditation status. The letter will include the status and term of accreditation and specific information about any cited areas for improvement and/or stipulations in terms of the EPP's ability to meet the CAEP standards. The letter is sent to the head administrator of the EPP; the chief executive officer of the institution or organization is sent a copy of the letter.

When the EPP is sent its letter of accreditation status, CAEP notifies the applicable state agency (or relevant government agency for international EPPs) and members of the site visit team that the status and term of CAEP accreditation granted to an EPP can be accessed in their workspaces in CAEP's Accreditation Information Management System (AIMS).

Within 30 days of the accreditation decision, CAEP notifies the U.S. Department of Education (or relevant government agency for international EPPs) of the status and term of CAEP accreditation granted to EPPs reviewed at the last Accreditation Council meeting. At the same time, CAEP shares the accreditation decisions with the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA); representatives of national, regional, and specialized accrediting agencies; and the state affiliates of the National Education Association (NEA) and American Federation of Teachers (AFT). Also within 30 days of the accreditation decision, CAEP posts current and appropriate information about the accreditation status of its EPPs on its website (www.caepnet.org).

An EPP is provided the opportunity to respond to the adverse actions of denial or revocation (see *Policy VII, Adverse Action*), including an appeal of the decision. The U.S. Department of Education and the appropriate state or national authorities are notified of the final decision of any adverse action at the same time as the EPP, but no later than 30 days after the Accreditation Council reaches a decision. Within 24 hours of its notice to the EPP, CAEP posts a notice on its website, informing the public of final decisions about probationary accreditation or the denial or revocation of the accreditation of an EPP.

Within sixty (60) days after a final decision to deny or revoke accreditation (and following an appeal of the initial decision), CAEP provides the U.S. Department of Education, the appropriate state or national authorities, and the public upon request, the Accreditation Council's final report summarizing the basis for its decision and the EPP's response to that decision, if any.

Additional Information Provided to the U.S. Department of Education

CAEP will regularly submit to the U.S. Department of Education the following information:

1. a copy of any annual report that it prepares;

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2. a summary of the agency's major accrediting activities during the previous year, if so requested;
3. any proposed change in CAEP's policies, procedures, or accreditation standards that might alter its scope of recognition or compliance with the criteria for recognition; and
4. a list of accredited EPPs and EPPs that are candidates for accreditation.

In accordance with U.S. federal requirements, CAEP will provide the U.S. Department of Education information regarding any valid complaint CAEP has received about an accredited EPP with regard to its failure to meet its Title IV, HEA program responsibilities, or its engagement in fraud or abuse or other complaints from relevant government entities for international institutions. Upon the request of the U.S. Department of Education, CAEP will provide information that may bear upon an accredited EPP's compliance with its Title IV, HEA program responsibilities, including the eligibility of the institution to participate in Title IV, HEA programs. CAEP will notify an EPP of inquiries it receives from the U.S. Department of Education, but will review on a case-by-case basis the circumstances surrounding the contact and any attendant need for confidentiality of that contact. Upon specific request by the U.S. Department of Education, CAEP will consider that contact confidential.

POLICY VI Representation of Accreditation Status to the Public

An EPP that has earned a CAEP accreditation status and wishes to state this affiliation on its website or other electronic systems or in its published materials should use the following official statement:

- *The [name of the EPP] at [name of entity of which it is part] is accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) for a period of [2, 5, or 7] years, from [date] to [date]. This accreditation includes the following sites: [name of all sites included in the accreditation]. The accreditation does not include individual education courses that the EPP offers to P-12 educators for professional development, re-licensure, or other purposes.*

Examples of publications in which this statement may appear include catalogs, handbooks, and the EPP's website. It is not necessary to include this statement in advertisements or in informal reports or presentations; in these cases, the CAEP logo or the phrase "CAEP accredited" or "a CAEP-accredited EPP" is sufficient.

In its disclosure of its status, the EPP must report that status accurately, including the specific academic or instructional programs covered by the status, and the name, address, and telephone number of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (1140 19th Street, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC, 20036, phone 202-223-0077.) 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.

Questions about the applicability of this statement to a particular document should be addressed to CAEP staff. Upon petition, variants of these statements of affiliation and accreditation may be authorized by CAEP. CAEP staff will periodically review EPP statements of affiliation and accreditation to ensure the accuracy of the information and representation.

POLICY VII Adverse Action

The CAEP Accreditation Council takes adverse action when an EPP does not meet one or more standards and/or the preponderance of evidence raises serious concerns about the quality of the EPP. It also takes adverse action when an EPP no longer meets CAEP standards or no longer complies with CAEP policy as demonstrated by verifiable evidence contained in complaints, annual reports, or special reviews. **CAEP's adverse actions are denial and revocation of accreditation.** In all cases the burden of proof that standards are met rests with the EPP.

Specifically, the following conditions will trigger a review that may result in adverse action:

1. Findings from a site visit or review of requested documentation reveal that an EPP no longer meets one or more CAEP standards;
2. An EPP no longer meets CAEP's eligibility requirements;
3. An EPP falsely reports data and/or plagiarizes information submitted for accreditation purposes;
4. An accredited EPP fails to submit annual reports, annual dues, or other documents required for accreditation; and/or
5. Investigation into a valid complaint indicates that CAEP standards are no longer being met (see *Policy VIII on Complaints against CAEP-accredited EPPs or against CAEP*).

CAEP may suspend the final accreditation process of an EPP if it knows that the EPP is subject to a pending, interim, or final action brought by a state agency (or relevant government agency for international EPPs) to suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the EPP's legal authority to provide postsecondary education in the state or country.

CAEP may request additional relevant information at any time when it has concerns about how well the EPP meets CAEP standards and eligibility requirements, whether based on materials submitted by the applicant or some other party.

CAEP may delay accreditation visits when it becomes aware of legal or other issues that raise serious concerns involving matters relevant to meeting CAEP standards and that cannot be resolved during the accreditation review. If the EPP is already accredited by CAEP, the EPP's accreditation will be extended until the issues can be resolved, unless the EPP otherwise fails to meet standards.

Furthermore, CAEP will initiate its own review into an EPP's initial or continuing accreditation status within 30 days if it is advised that the organization in which the EPP is located is the subject of (1) a pending or final action brought by a state agency (or relevant government agency for international EPPs) to suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the institution's legal authority to provide postsecondary education in the state; (2) a decision by a recognized institutional accrediting agency (or relevant government agency for international EPPs) to deny accreditation; (3) a pending or final action brought by a recognized institutional accrediting agency to suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate an institution's accreditation or; (4) probation, or an equivalent status imposed by a recognized institutional accrediting agency. CAEP will review the concerns raised by the national or regional institutional accreditor, request a report that describes the nature of the issues, and schedule a site visit, if appropriate. CAEP may grant accreditation to an EPP located in an institution that is subject to one of the four

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actions above if it provides to the Secretary of Education, within 30 days of its action, a thorough and reasonable explanation, consistent with its standards, why the action of the institutional accrediting agency does not preclude CAEP's granting of accreditation.

CAEP notifies the EPP in writing of any adverse accrediting action within 30 days of the Accreditation Council's action and provides a written justification of the decision. Within 15 days of receiving notification of the adverse decision, an EPP may inform CAEP in writing of its intention to appeal an adverse action. Other than financial information outlined in *Policy IX* on the appeals process, EPPs cannot introduce corrective action that occurred after the date of the site visit. (See *Policy V, Notification of Accreditation Decisions* and *Policy IX, Appeals Process*.)

POLICY VIII Complaints against CAEP-accredited EPPs or against CAEP

CAEP reviews carefully any allegations (1) that an accredited EPP has fallen out of compliance with accreditation standards or policies or (2) that CAEP has not followed its own policies. CAEP does not intervene in the internal procedures of EPPs, 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 *Operating Procedures*.

CAEP accepts only written complaints where the complainant is identified and his or her relationship to the EPP or CAEP is disclosed. The complaint must be sent to the CAEP President or Chair of the CAEP Board at the following address: (1140 19th Street, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC, 20036)

If the complaint is about an EPP, the identity of the complainant will not be disclosed by CAEP to the EPP. However, anonymity cannot be guaranteed during the investigation process. Written complaints against an EPP must include the following relevant information:

1. A statement of facts and circumstances showing (a) noncompliance with CAEP's policies or standards by an accredited EPP, or (b) actions by an accredited EPP that may jeopardize its accreditation.
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 which led to the complaint. **CAEP will not investigate complaints based on events which began more than two years prior to the filing of a formal complaint.**

Unless a complaint is against CAEP, the President, or a designee, reviews it to determine whether it is related to the CAEP standards or policies. The chair of CAEP's Board determines the relevance of a complaint against CAEP. After the relevance of a complaint is established, it is forwarded to the Council's Complaint Review Committee for investigation and a recommendation for further action by the Council or Board as appropriate. The complainant and the EPP or other relevant party (e.g., staff member) are notified of the action taken at each step of this process as identified in CAEP's *Operating Procedures*.

POLICY IX Appeals Process

In the case of an adverse action (i.e., denial or revocation), an EPP may appeal the decision prior to the action becoming final. CAEP accepts appeals of adverse accreditation decisions under the following conditions:

1. Stated procedures were not followed by the site visitors, the Commissioners, the Accreditation Council, or CAEP staff;
2. Demonstrable bias, conflict of interest, or prejudice by site visitors, Commissioners, or members of the Accreditation Council influenced the Accreditation Council's accreditation decision; and/or
3. CAEP's decision was not supported adequately or was contrary to the facts presented and known at the time of the decision.

Before CAEP reaches a final adverse action decision, an EPP may seek review of new financial information that (1) was unavailable to the EPP until after the accreditation decision was made, (2) is significant and bears directly on financial deficiencies identified during the site visit and/or review, or (3) is the only remaining deficiency in support of an adverse action against the EPP. The review of new financial information may be conducted only once and does not provide the basis for an appeal. Other than the financial information noted above, the Appeals Panel cannot consider evidence that was not reviewed or considered by the CAEP Accreditation Council at the time of its decision and cannot take into account evidence of corrective action that occurs after the date of the decision by the Accreditation Council.

The Appeals Committee consists of fifteen (15) members, including former members of the Commissions, and members of the public. An Appeals Committee member cannot be a current Board member, member of the Accreditation Council, or current site visitor. The Appeals Committee otherwise complies with comparable provisions for Committees of the Board. For each appeal hearing, the CAEP President appoints an Appeals Panel of five (5) members drawn from the Appeals Committee. A majority of the Appeals Panel members will have formerly served on a Commission or its predecessor accrediting body in NCATE or TEAC and at least one will be a representative of the public. In no case will an Appeals Panel member be appointed who was involved in the accreditation recommendation subject to appeal. The panel hears an EPP's appeal and reports its action to the Accreditation Council.

The EPP may be represented by general counsel and must pay all of its own expenses associated with the appeal. Until the appeals process is completed, the status of the EPP prior to the submission of the appeal will remain in effect. For further guidance, please refer to the CAEP Bylaws and the CAEP Operating Procedures.

In its deliberations, the Appeals Panel may recommend affirming, amending, reversing, or remanding the adverse action taken by the Accreditation Council. If the Appeals Panel amends or reverses the accreditation decision, the new decision is final and is reported to the EPP and the Accreditation Council. If the Appeals Panel remands the adverse decision to the Accreditation Council for further consideration, it must identify specific issues that the Council must address. In a decision that is implemented by or remanded to the Accreditation Council, the Council must act in a manner consistent with the Appeals Panel's decisions or instructions. If the Appeals Panel affirms the Council's accreditation decision, the adverse decision is final; the EPP may revert to candidate status for no more than two years at which time it must host a site visit.

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At the conclusion of the appeals process, CAEP notifies the EPP in writing of its accreditation status and informs the U.S. Department of Education (or relevant government agency in the case of international EPPs), the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), the public, national and regional accrediting agencies, and the applicable state agency or relevant government agency for international EPPs of any changes to accreditation status of the EPP.

POLICY X Withdrawal or Lapse of Accreditation

An EPP has the right to withdraw from the accreditation process at any time. Its accreditation status is terminated immediately or at the time requested by the EPP as fees continue to be paid. To maintain accreditation to the end of the accreditation cycle, all dues and other fees must be paid and annual reports must be submitted to CAEP. If an EPP withdraws after an adverse decision has been made by the Council, the adverse decision remains the final Council decision.

Lapse of accreditation is considered a *de facto* withdrawal when an EPP fails to submit its self-study report or host a site visit as scheduled.

Within 30 days of the effective date of the withdrawal or lapse of accreditation, CAEP will notify the Secretary of Education (or relevant government agency in the case of international EPPs), the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), the public, representatives of national and regional accrediting agencies, and applicable state agency or relevant government agency for international EPPs.

POLICY XI Misleading or Incorrect Statements

EPPs must ensure the adequacy and accuracy of information they make available to prospective candidates and the public. In particular, information released by the EPP pertaining to its accreditation status or educational effectiveness of candidates (e.g., standardized test results, job placement rates, and licensing examination rates) must be accurate and current.

All information submitted by the EPP for accreditation purposes – including program reviews, self-study report, self-study addendum, and response to the site visit report – must accurately reflect the programs and practices of the EPP.

When CAEP becomes aware that an accredited EPP has misrepresented any action taken by CAEP with respect to the EPP and/or its accreditation status, or uses accreditation reports or materials in a false or misleading manner, CAEP requires the EPP to correct these misrepresentations. The EPP must make public such information as CAEP deems necessary to correct any false or misleading statements. If the EPP fails to correct the statements, CAEP will treat the failure as the basis for an adverse action and follow the procedures under *Policy VII, Adverse Action*.

POLICY XII Time Frames for Achieving Compliance

The regulations of the U.S. Department of Education on recognition of accrediting agencies specify maximum time frames for an EPP to bring itself into compliance when an accrediting agency finds a violation of accrediting standards has occurred. Except where otherwise noted, EPPs located outside the United States are expected to meet the same time frames as U.S. EPPs. In order to meet these requirements, CAEP will not permit an EPP to remain in non-compliance with its standards beyond the following time limits:

1. Twelve (12) months if the EPP's longest program is less than one year in length;
2. Eighteen (18) months if the EPP's longest program is at least one year, but less than two years in length;
3. Twenty-four (24) months if the EPP's longest program is at least two years in length.

If the EPP does not bring itself into compliance within the specified period, the Accreditation Council will revoke the EPP's accreditation. CAEP, however, may extend these time limits if it specifically determines that there is good cause to do so (see *Policy XVII, Good Cause Extension*).

POLICY XIII Substantive Change

CAEP respects institutional autonomy, but requires EPPs to communicate with CAEP about the substantive changes below. CAEP has the responsibility to determine what effect, if any, these changes would have on an EPP's accreditation. Examples of substantive changes that EPPs are required to report include:

1. Changes in the published mission or objectives of the institution/organization or the EPP;
2. Addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure, in terms of either content or delivery, from those that were offered when CAEP most recently accredited the EPP;
3. A contract with other providers for direct instructional services, including any teach-out agreements;
4. The addition of programs *of study* at a degree or credential level *different from* that which is included in the EPP's current accreditation; and/or
5. Any change that means the EPP no longer satisfies CAEP standards or requirements.

CAEP accreditation staff may add additional categories of substantive changes related specifically to EPPs and CAEP standards when the annual report is revised annually.

POLICY XIV Annual Reports

All accredited EPPs must submit an annual report to maintain their accreditation status. CAEP uses the annual reports (1) to monitor whether the EPP continues to meet the CAEP standards between site visits, (2) to collect and analyze headcount enrollment data, including for distance education programs, (3) to review how the EPP addresses any cited areas for improvement or stipulations with respect to an aspect or component of a standard, (4) to monitor reports of substantive changes, (5) to monitor how the EPP publicly reports candidate achievement on its website (6) **to include measures as specified in Accreditation Council procedures and (7) to report progress on SI, TI and phase-in plans.** An EPP must submit verifiable evidence within 2 years of having successfully

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addressed the stipulation(s) cited by the Accreditation Council in its accreditation decision in order to maintain its accreditation status.

An EPP submits its annual report electronically in CAEP's Accreditation Information Management System (AIMS). CAEP may request additional relevant information at any time when it has concerns about whether the EPP continues to meet CAEP standards, eligibility requirements, or policies.

POLICY XV Inclusion of Programs in Multiple Sites, including Distance Learning

CAEP requires that the evidence put forward by an EPP demonstrates that its educator preparation program, wherever and however delivered, meets CAEP standards. EPPs with distance learning programs must have the capacity to ensure their timely delivery, to provide necessary support services, and accommodate current candidate numbers and expected near-term growth in enrollment.

An EPP with multiple sites provides evidence that the following conditions are met at each site:

1. Regional requirements for delivery are met;
2. The accreditation plan satisfies the U.S. Department of Education 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 states/countries have been disclosed to candidates; and
5. The quality assurance system ensures that data are sufficient to represent quality throughout the EPP.

When an EPP submits a program delivered at multiple sites for accreditation, the candidate assessment data can be disaggregated. The site may be visited if the program is distinct. When scheduling its site visit, an EPP with multiple sites must submit an accreditation plan and 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 site visits to multiple sites, if any, will be scheduled.

CAEP also reviews the process used by faculty and the EPP itself to verify the identity of candidates taking distance education courses by specifying in its training of site visit teams the procedures for verifying student identity. As noted in *Policy II, CAEP Accreditation Process*, EPPs are expected to address and provide evidence of the EPP's capacity of quality for each site as well as for any of its distance-education options in terms of the seven areas identified by the U.S. Department of Education for capacity: curriculum, program faculty; facilities, equipment, and supplies; fiscal and administrative capacity; student support services; recruiting and admissions practices, academic calendars, catalogs, publications, grading, and advertising; student feedback and complaints.⁵ In addition, evidence must show graduates' success with

⁵ In cases where an international institution cannot comply with one of the capacity elements, it will need to provide a justification of why this cannot be done in the national context. The justification should be made at the time of the

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respect to student achievement in terms of completing the preparation program, obtaining an appropriate license, and, if possible, job placement rates.

POLICY XVI Accreditation Decisions of Other Accrediting Agencies

CAEP requires all U.S. higher education institutions in which EPPs are located to be accredited by an institutional accrediting agency that is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). EPPs located outside the United States must be recognized by the appropriate quality assurance agency in their country. EPPs that are not located in higher education institutions must provide evidence of their capacity to offer EPP programs by submitting information required to establish eligibility for CAEP accreditation.

CAEP accepts and recognizes the accreditation of specialty area programs by specialized accreditors recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) as attesting to the quality of specialty areas such as music education, library science, and school counseling. This accreditation by a nationally recognized specialized accreditor is accepted by CAEP in lieu of the program report described in *Policy XXXVI, Program Review Options*. CAEP requires an EPP to present the official notice of accreditation from the specialized accrediting organization during its accreditation review.

POLICY XVII Good Cause Extension

An EPP may request an extension to its accreditation term for good cause for a period up to one year in consultation with the state/country partner. Extensions beyond one year may be granted in keeping with *Policy XII, Time Frames for Achieving Compliance*, but must be approved by the Accreditation Council. The site visit that follows an approved extension of a visit generally is scheduled five to six years after the extended visit to maintain the EPP's original seven-year accreditation cycle. EPPs will be charged for any expenses already incurred by CAEP at the time the delay was requested and granted. **If the Site Visitor Team determines in an offsite conference that an EPP is not ready, the Site Visitor Team may recommend the Site Visit be delayed. CAEP, state or international authority, and EPP must consent to the delay before it would be granted.**

Decisions regarding requests for good cause extension of accreditation terms may be based on one or more of the following factors:

- desired concurrent CAEP and state/country review;
- new state or national standards or legislation that require significant programmatic change;
- changes in leadership;
- substantive changes (see *Policy XIII, Substantive Change*);
- difficulties related to facilities; and
- other extenuating circumstances such as a merger with another institution or a hurricane..

application for CAEP accreditation when eligibility is determined by staff review. CAEP staff will determine if other information must be submitted to address the identified capacity element.

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EPPs may not request an extension if they have been designated as low-performing or at-risk of being low-performing by the state/country or if their institution has been placed on warning, probation, or notice by the regional accreditor.

POLICY XVIII Accreditation Fees

CAEP is committed to conducting an accreditation process that is efficient, cost-effective and cost-accountable. CAEP reserves the right to develop and adjust fees for accreditation as necessary. All fees are reviewed annually in the spring in preparation for the development of the next year's budget and determination of future annual accreditation fees. Notice of annual fee increases beyond a cost of living is provided to programs at least one (1) year in advance. Notice of other fee increases is provided at the time that they are implemented.

CAEP fees are determined by the CAEP President with input from the Chief Financial Officer, CAEP's Executive Team, and other parties as appropriate. The CAEP Executive Committee reviews the proposed fees and makes recommendations as warranted. The final fee structure is included in an annual budget of revenues and expenditures that is approved by the CAEP Board of Directors.

POLICY XIX Accreditation of EPPs Located outside the United States

CAEP's accreditation of international EPPs follows the policies and procedures outlined in this document. Where there are differences for international EPPs, they are so noted.

CAEP expects international EPPs seeking CAEP accreditation to provide their self-study report and all documentation in English and that site visits will be conducted with English as the language of interaction. Site visit teams will, whenever possible, include members proficient in the language of the EPP, but the EPP is responsible for providing translators who are familiar with the preparation of educators when needed. English, however, does not have to be the language of instruction at the EPP.

At the time of making application for eligibility 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. The international EPP must also define the term(s) used in its country for educator credentialing and the grades/childhood designations covered under the relevant EPP programs. A statement of institutional commitment to educator preparation must accompany the eligibility application. If there are components of a standard or standards that are not attainable, the international EPP needs to identify them during the eligibility process along with an explanation of the component(s) that cannot be determined. In the eligibility application, each international EPP must identify the program review process in which it will engage (*Policy XXXVI, Program Review Options*). In the absence of a government partnership agreement or equivalent for EPPs located outside the United States, all three of the program review options will be made available.

In cases where an international institution cannot comply with one of the seven capacity elements as stated by the U.S. Department of Education, it will need to provide a justification of why this cannot be demonstrated in its country. The justification is done at the time of eligibility

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in order to determine the suitability of the EPP for CAEP accreditation. CAEP staff determines if other information must be submitted to address the identified capacity element. (See the footnote accompanying *Policy II, CAEP Accreditation Process*, and *Policy XV, Inclusion of Programs in Multiple Sites, including Distance Learning*.)

POLICY XX Teach-out Plan

CAEP will review the teach-out plan and/or teach-out agreement that an EPP submits in its self-study report for use under the following circumstances:

1. The United States Department of Education, or relevant government agency for international EPPs, initiates an action against an institution or EPP;
2. The institutional accreditor withdraws or terminates accreditation;
3. The EPP ceases operation; or
4. A state/country licensing or an authorizing agency revokes the EPP's program approval.

The teach-out plan of the institution or organization in which the EPP is housed may cover these conditions for the EPP.

Section Two: Policies Related to CAEP Governance and Administration

POLICY XXI Code of Ethics

Members of the CAEP Board of Directors (hereinafter referred to as Board), Accreditation Council (hereinafter referred to as Council), Commissions, site visitors, program reviewers, specialized professional association (SPA) coordinators, consultants, and staff are expected to maintain the highest standards of ethical behavior, which include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Conducting oneself professionally, with truth, accuracy, and fairness;
2. Not accepting consulting assignments related to an EPP's accreditation during their term of service or for a year after their service;
3. Declaring potential conflicts or competing interests in the accreditation process (see *Policy XXII, Conflict of Interest*);
4. Maintaining confidences of all parties involved in the accreditation process and decisions (see *Policy XXIII, Confidentiality*);
5. Not intentionally communicating false or misleading information that might compromise the integrity of the accreditation process or decision;
6. Not undertaking accrediting responsibilities for which they have not been trained comprehensively in CAEP's policies, practices, principles, and standards;
7. Not showing biased or prejudice against an EPP being reviewed or others involved in the accreditation process; and
8. Not accepting gifts, bribery, or anything of value that may give the appearance of favor or partiality in any decisions rendered regarding accreditation.

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CAEP subscribes to the Member Code of Good Practice of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (www.aspa-usa.org).

POLICY XXII Conflict of Interest

CAEP Directors, Councilors, Commissioners, site visitors, program reviewers, SPA coordinators, consultants, and staff are expected to maintain relationships and practices in their CAEP activities that are legal, professional, ethical, and morally correct. 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 wrongdoing. They should also exclude themselves from CAEP activities for any reason that may represent an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

CAEP Directors, Councilors, Commissioners, site visitors, program reviewers, SPA coordinators, CAEP consultants, and staff are asked to declare a conflict of interest if they have a close, active association with an EPP that is being considered for official action. Examples of a “close, active association” include but are not limited to:

1. Serving on or having served within the last five years on a statewide or national decision-making board or committee that reviewed the EPP;
2. Having been a member of the faculty or staff or a candidate at the EPP or institution/organization in which it is housed within the past ten years;
3. Under consideration for employment as faculty or staff at the EPP or institution/organization;
4. Participating in a common consortium or special research relationship;
5. Having jointly authored research or literature with a faculty member at that EPP;
6. Having an immediate family member attending or employed by the EPP or institution/organization, or under consideration for employment at the EPP or institution/organization;
7. Having been a consultant at the EPP within the past 10 years;
8. Having advised a doctoral candidate who is now a member of the EPP faculty; and/or
9. 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.

Bias. CAEP Directors, Councilors, Commissioners, site visitors, program reviewers, SPA coordinators, CAEP consultants, and staff do not advance personal agendas in the conduct of accreditation reviews by applying personal or partisan interpretations of CAEP standards. They examine the facts as they exist and are not influenced by past reputation, media accounts, etc., about EPPs or programs being reviewed. They exclude themselves from participating in CAEP activities if, to their knowledge, there is some predisposing factor that could prejudice them with respect to the accreditation of EPPs.

Compensation/Gifts. CAEP Directors, Councilors, Commissioners, site visitors, program reviewers or SPA coordinators, consultants, and staff 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’s culture.) Site visitors do not expect elaborate hospitality during

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site visits and use restraint in any expenditures charged to the campus being visited.

Consulting. CAEP Directors, Councilors, Commissioners, site visitors, program reviewers or SPA coordinators, CAEP consultants, and staff will not engage in consultation arrangements with EPPs seeking CAEP accreditation while actively serving as members of the CAEP Board, Commissions, Council, or site visit teams. This Conflict of Interest policy also applies to consultants hired to work for CAEP. (See *Policy XXI, Code of Ethics.*)

POLICY XXIII Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an integral part of the accreditation process. CAEP's Board, Council, Commissions, site visitors, program reviewers or SPA coordinators, CAEP consultants, and staff must have access to sensitive information in order to conduct reviews of EPPs and must protect the confidentiality of this information. Specifically, members of these groups must treat as confidential all elements of the CAEP accreditation process and information gathered as part of the process. They share information and perceptions with discipline and care and do not discuss in public places the particulars of an accreditation site visit or the specifics of a case.

All information that is provided to CAEP in preparation for an accreditation review or an appeal of an accreditation decision is considered to be the property of the EPP and is not made available to the public by CAEP. These materials include self-study reports, program review documentation, formative reviewer comments, offsite and onsite team reports, third-party testimony, stakeholder survey results, EPP responses to team reports, and appeals documents. CAEP may use some of these documents for training and research purposes, but only with permission from the EPP.

Samples of these materials will be available to the U.S. Department of Education (or relevant government agency for international institutions) and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation as part of CAEP's periodic review by those organizations. Information provided to the U.S. Department of Education is covered by the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

POLICY XXIV Open Communication in CAEP

CAEP and EPPs will maintain open and frequent communications on any and all matters relevant to accreditation, including the decision points for (1) establishing eligibility; (2) formative evaluation and offsite review; (3) reports based on the site visit that assess the EPP's compliance with CAEP standards and assess their performance with regard to candidate achievement; (4) the accreditation decision of the Accreditation Council; (5) the acceptance of the program's annual report; (6) any notification by the president of the results of an appeal of an accreditation decision by the program; or (7) any adverse action taken by CAEP over a failure of the program to remain in compliance with its accreditation status.

At each of these junctures, CAEP will explain in writing the logic and basis of its decision and provide the EPP with sufficient opportunity to write a response to the findings that would explain and/or support any contrary views it may wish to have CAEP consider in its deliberations and decision making.

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Reports based on the site visit include the report written by the site visit team and the Commission's determination of the degree of the EPP's compliance with each of CAEP's standards and requirements, which is reflected in the Council's final action report. The Commission's determination notes evidence that CAEP standards are met and identifies any areas for improvement and/or stipulations in terms of the evidence that should be addressed in the program's subsequent annual reports or by specific action within two years of accreditation.

POLICY XXV Qualifications and Training of CAEP Volunteers

CAEP volunteers who conduct site visits, review programs, or serve on the Board, Council, Commissions, or committees are qualified by education and experience in their fields of specialization. They include academic and administrative personnel from EPPs, educators from EPPs, practitioners, and public members. All CAEP volunteers are trained in CAEP standards, policies, procedures, and ethics as well as the processes for the revision and establishment of policies, and the process for making accreditation recommendations or decisions. Training includes responsibilities regarding the application of standards to EPPs including their distance education programs.

CAEP staff oversees the training of site visitors who have demonstrated expertise in professional education, teaching, research, and/or evaluation. Site visit teams have skills in evaluation techniques such as the interpretation of quantified data and qualitative measures, the use of rating scales and questionnaires, interviewing and observation techniques, reading and analyzing narrative information, and writing observations and evaluations. In training sessions they learn to make sound judgments about EPPs based on the self-study report and supporting evidence prepared by the EPP to make its case for accreditation and the investigations of the evidence during the site visit.

Required, formal training for new Directors, Councilors, Commissioners, and site visitors occurs on an annual basis prior to their assuming duties in the CAEP accreditation process. Additional training sessions may be held on an as-needed basis.

CAEP demonstrates a commitment to increasing or maintaining diversity by representing the interests and seeking the perspectives of diverse populations in CAEP programs, committees, and activities.

A list of members of the CAEP decision-making bodies, including affiliations and professional qualifications, is available on the CAEP website.

POLICY XXVI Public Representatives in CAEP

A public representative in CAEP is a person who is not a member of a governing board, owner, or shareholder of, or consultant to an EPP or the institution/organization in which the EPP is located that is either accredited by CAEP or has applied for accreditation. The person cannot be a member of any trade association or membership organization related to, affiliated with, or associated with CAEP, nor is he or she a spouse, parent, child or sibling of an individual identified above.

The public representative may not accept remuneration from the EPP for goods or service

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currently or in the past. The public representative cannot be related by blood or marriage to someone affiliated with the CAEP accreditation system or an employee of an EPP accredited by CAEP or considering accreditation by CAEP.

At least one public representative is appointed to each decision-making body: the Board of Directors, Commissions, Council, and the Appeals Committee. Public members apply their expertise, experience, and knowledge to extend the perspective and insights of the work of CAEP specifically and the quality of educator preparation generally. They are full and active voting members of each decision-making body to which they are appointed or elected and are expected to attend all regular meetings and participate in the work of the governing body. Terms are three years, with the option for reappointment to at least one additional term.

POLICY XXVII Board of Directors' Responsibilities and Authority

The affairs, activities, and policies of CAEP are managed by or under the direction of its Board of Directors. Board responsibilities, as stated in Article III of CAEP's bylaws, shall include but not be limited to the following:

1. Make policy for CAEP;
2. Elect the directors of the Board ("Directors") to the extent permitted by applicable law, appoint the officers, and appoint the chairs and other members of its committees and the chair of its Accreditation Council;
3. Elect or appoint the directors of Affiliates;
4. Review the activities and performance of CAEP and Affiliates, its Commissions, the Accreditation Council, and any other accrediting bodies maintained by CAEP or affiliates, but not individual accreditation decisions;
5. Review and approve the annual budget of CAEP and Affiliates, and establish budget procedures and provide for and review an annual certified, independent audit of CAEP and Affiliate's financial books and records; and
6. Approve the Chair's recommendations for the agendas, times, and places for the Board's meetings.

Regular meetings of the Board of Directors will be held at such places and times as it may designate. There shall be at least one regular meeting each year, which is referred to as the annual meeting.

Directors are not compensated for services rendered to CAEP in their capacities as directors. They are reimbursed, in reasonable amounts, for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as Directors. A director may also receive board approval to perform non-accreditation services for CAEP in a capacity or capacities other than as a director, and if so, may receive compensation for such services if they are reasonable and necessary to carrying out the exempt purposes of CAEP and if such compensation is not excessive. (See *Section 3.12 of the CAEP Bylaws*.)

POLICY XXVIII Commissions' Responsibilities and Authority

CAEP includes three Commissions, one for each accreditation pathway. Each Commission is responsible for determining whether CAEP standards are met and any areas for improvement

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(AFIs) or stipulations related to the standards. This determination is then sent to the CAEP Council for an accreditation decision (see *Policy XXIX, Accreditation Council Responsibilities and Authority*).

The number of Commissioners, CAEP staff, and resources assigned to each Commission must be sufficient to provide for the expected number of accreditation cases each year. Each Commission may determine the number of its Commissioners annually. The terms of Commissioners are concurrent with their membership on either NCATE's Unit Accreditation Board or TEAC's Accreditation Committee, as applicable.

Each Commission provides oversight for the routine operational functions pertaining to each accreditation pathway. The **Selected** Improvement, Inquiry Brief, and Transformation Initiative Commission (1) monitor annual reports submitted by EPPs for evidence that standards continue to be met **with oversight by the Annual Reports and Monitoring Committee of the Accreditation Council**; (2) select new site visitors; (3) oversee the training of Commissioners in their determination of how well the EPPs meet CAEP standards and prepare their analysis for the Council; (4) oversee the cross-training of Commissioners in the three accreditation pathways; (5) formulate and keep up-to-date written statements of their procedures; and (6) adopt and change their policies, procedures, number of options, and practices as appropriate and approved by the Board of Directors.

In preparing an initial analysis of the evidence for review and consideration by the Council, each Commission:

1. Reviews the self-study report submitted by the EPP, the offsite formative report (if applicable), the self-study addendum (if applicable), the site visit report, and the EPP's response to the site visit report;
2. Identifies any areas for improvement and/or stipulations in the evidence the EPP has put forward in terms of CAEP standards and policies;
3. Assesses an EPP's performance with regard to candidate achievement;
4. Writes the Commission's Review Panel Report for presentation to the Council; and
5. Certifies whether CAEP policies and procedures were followed.

Regular meetings of the Commissions are held immediately before the meeting of the Council. The Commissions generally meet semiannually. Commissioners are reimbursed for expenses, in reasonable amounts, incurred in the performance of their duties to CAEP.

As long as CAEP chooses to be recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and/or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, the Commissions will comply with any other applicable requirements imposed by such entities for such recognition.

POLICY XXIX Accreditation Council Responsibilities and Authority

All members of the Commissions are ex officio voting members of the Council. Its chair (who is not a member of a Commission) are also voting members. The Council grants or withholds accreditation, based upon the review of documents specified below, and certifies whether CAEP's policies and procedures were followed in making its recommendations.

At its scheduled meetings, the Council reviews the EPP's self-study report, other reviews of evidence as applicable, the site visit report, the EPP's response to the site visit report, and the

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record of the Commissions' deliberations and their determinations of the EPP's compliance with CAEP standards. After deliberation, the Council makes an accreditation decision that indicates a single accreditation status for an EPP. The EPP may appeal an adverse decision of the Council (see *Policy VII, Adverse Action*). Appeals are reviewed in accordance with CAEP's policy on appeals (see *Policy IX, Appeals Process*).

Regular meetings of the Council will be held semiannually at such places and times as it may designate.

At the close of its meeting, the Council members will debrief on the CAEP process followed in bringing the cases forward for accreditation. It will analyze its own decision-making, particularly with reference to individual and collective confidence in its conclusions and accreditation decisions and to procedural modifications it would like to implement at its next meeting.

Councilors are reimbursed for expenses, in reasonable amounts, incurred in the performance of their duties to CAEP.

POLICY XXX Site Visitors' Responsibilities

Site visitors must attend, participate in, and successfully complete training in the application of CAEP standards appropriate to the accreditation pathway that they will be assigned to review. In training, they also learn how to conduct accreditation reviews and how to write site visit reports. They are expected to participate regularly in CAEP's web seminars on the CAEP standards, the CAEP accreditation process, and any policy or procedural changes.

Site visitors are expected to participate fully in the site visit, 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 and visit. Site visitors are reimbursed for expenses, in reasonable amounts, incurred during training and conducting site visits.

In assigning teams, CAEP staff takes into consideration the size, type, scope, and language of the EPP to be visited.

Individuals who serve as site visitors are expected to accept an assignment for at least one site visit a year and are initially appointed to three-year terms. They may be reappointed for a second three-year term and reappointed for additional terms as appropriate. Their performance is evaluated by the EPP and by peers on teams following a site visit. In addition, CAEP Commissions evaluate the quality of reports submitted after the site visit and include this information in the electronic record of each site visitor.

Site visitors will be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties to CAEP, in reasonable amounts.

Site team members represent CAEP as an organization, abide by its Code of Ethics, and should be ready to answer questions regarding CAEP accreditation in informal and formal occasions. (See *Policy XXI, Code of Ethics*, and *Policy XXV, Qualifications and Training of CAEP Volunteers*.)

POLICY XXXI Practitioner Involvement

CAEP values the participation of teachers, principals, and other school professionals in all aspects of the accreditation process. It defines practitioners as professionals who spend the majority of their workweek in schools for preschool through 12th grade students or as administrators of school districts.

CAEP's standards expect practitioners to be involved in the decision-making activities of an EPP, but CAEP also expects practitioners to be involved in the decision-making activities of CAEP itself. CAEP's bylaws require that four of the 20 Directors of the Board are teachers and that one of the Directors is a school administrator. The Council, Commissions, Appeals Committee, and site visitors include practitioners, EPP educators and administrators. CAEP ensures that practitioners in P-12 schools are appointed and trained to serve as site visitors and as members of the CAEP Board, Council, Commissions, and Appeals Committee.

POLICY XXXII Consistent Application of Standards

Consistent with the standards, the CAEP accreditation process evaluates whether the EPP (1) maintains clearly specified educational objectives consistent with its mission and appropriate in light of the degrees or certificates awarded; (2) is successful in achieving its stated objectives; and (3) maintains degree and certification requirements that at least conform to commonly accepted standards.

CAEP ensures that site visitors and members of the Commissions, Council, and Appeals Committee consistently apply CAEP's standards through a variety of methods that include the following:

1. Members of the Commissions and Council engage in debriefings at the end of each meeting to provide feedback on how CAEP standards are consistently applied as part of its deliberations;
2. The Council, as part of its review of recommendations, engages in periodic calibration exercises to ensure that standards are being consistently applied across EPPs;
3. CAEP's training programs for members of its site visit teams, Commissions, and Council are designed to ensure that CAEP's standards are consistently applied;
4. CAEP accreditation staff conducts an annual analysis of all areas of improvement and/or stipulations and the decisions of the Council to assess consistency;
5. CAEP staff solicits feedback regarding the application of CAEP standards from EPPs, site visit teams, and state/country consultants; and
6. CAEP, through the Board's Research Committee, annually reviews the performance of the Commissions and Council for their consistent application of standards across Commissions.

POLICY XXXIII Evaluation of the CAEP Accreditation Process

The CAEP standards require EPPs to engage in continuous improvement, which requires collecting and evaluating candidate performance and other data. CAEP also models the collection of data regarding its ability and capacity to perform its accreditation activities at the highest level. In this regard, CAEP engages in ongoing self-evaluation of its standards,

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processes, procedures, and site visitors through both internal and external review to continuously improve its accreditation work.

Internal Evaluations

Each EPP that undergoes an accreditation review is asked to complete an evaluation of CAEP's accreditation procedures, including staff support. EPPs are also asked to evaluate the performance and professionalism of the site team members who conducted the accreditation visit and the program reviewers who evaluate specific programs as required by a state or country partnership agreement.

CAEP also seeks feedback on the process from those who conduct site visits. They are asked to evaluate the site visit, the performance of their peers on the visiting team, and the training sessions that prepared them for their CAEP responsibilities.

CAEP compiles the results of these evaluations and presents the summary to the CAEP Board of Directors and the Council on a regular basis. Procedures may be modified or new policies introduced based on the results of these evaluations. Evaluations of site visitors are used to monitor, on a continuous basis, their overall performance and effectiveness.

Each Commission evaluates site visit reports reviewed at a meeting. In an effort to continuously improve the quality of reports, the results of these evaluations are available to site visitors in their AIMS workspace. Each Commission monitors the quality of site visit reports over time in order to identify areas that may require additional training.

As noted in *Policy XXXVIII, Review and Revision of Standards*, CAEP periodically seeks survey feedback on its standards and the accreditation process from EPPs, site visitors, and states or countries. These surveys provide evidence for the revision of standards, policies, and procedures.

External Evaluations

CAEP periodically contracts with an external evaluator to survey EPPs and other stakeholders about the quality of CAEP standards, policies, and procedures; the value of accreditation; the currency and relevancy of standards; and other accreditation issues as determined by the Board or the President of CAEP. The results of these external surveys are used for continuous improvement and are shared with the Board's Research Committee, the Board, the Council, and Commissions as appropriate.

POLICY XXXIV Record Retention

CAEP maintains complete and accurate records of its last two full accreditation reviews of each EPP, including the self-study report, formative feedback report (if applicable), the self-study addendum (if applicable), site visit report, the EPP's response to the site visit report, the accreditation letter, and the accreditation action report. These records correspond to each level of review summarized in AIMS under the **Selected** Improvement, the Inquiry Brief, or the Transformation Initiative Pathway. They include any reports of special reviews or periodic reviews conducted by CAEP between regular reviews. CAEP also retains copies of all accreditation decisions, including all adverse actions, complaints, withdrawal letters, or other formal communication with the institution or EPP.

**Section Three:
Policies Related to States, Countries, and the Public**

POLICY XXXV State and International Partnerships

CAEP may enter into an agreement with one or more state agency or relevant government agency for international EPPs responsible for approving educator preparation programs. The purpose of State/Country Partnerships is to share information about the quality of EPPs between CAEP and the state (or country) and to reduce the duplication and cost of reviewing EPPs by both the state (or country) and CAEP using common CAEP standards.

POLICY XXXVI Program Review Options

To provide information to EPPs, states (or relevant government agencies for international EPPs), and CAEP site visitors about the quality of specific specialty areas, CAEP manages a system for reviewing these areas and providing reports to help the states in their program approval function. CAEP's state or non-U.S. governmental partners are asked to choose among the following three options, or a combination of them, for the review of an EPP's specialty areas studies in their state or country. In the absence of a state partnership agreement or equivalent for EPPs located outside the United States, all three of the following options are available to EPPs:

- **Program Review with National Recognition:** An EPP's specialty areas submit program reports responding to standards defined by the specialized professional association (SPA). These program reports are reviewed by the appropriate SPA, which provides a report on its findings and determines its national recognition of programs.
- **Program Review with Feedback:** EPPs align evidence/data with CAEP Standards and state standards/requirements or relevant government agency for international EPPs. EPP's specialty areas are reviewed in three clusters. The three clusters will be (1) cross-grade programs such as elementary education and special education; (2) secondary programs such as mathematics education and English language arts education; and (3) other school professionals such as school psychologists and principals. The review of program review with feedback is conducted by the Site Visitor Team as part of the accreditation process.
- **State Program Review:** EPP's specialty areas are reviewed by the state or relevant government agency for international EPPs. State or country reviews of programs are available to the EPP and CAEP site visitors.

POLICY XXXVII State or International Representatives on Site Visit Teams

CAEP invites (1) representatives from the state agency (agencies) or relevant government agency for international EPPs responsible for educator preparation as identified in the state or country partnership agreement and, in the United States, (2) one representative from the state affiliates of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) or National Education Association (NEA) to join an accreditation review. The representatives from NEA or AFT state affiliates serve as observers on the site visit. The representative from the state agency or relevant

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government agency for international EPPs serves as a state/country consultant to the team, providing the state/ country context and clarifying state/country requirements. The following conditions apply to these appointments:

1. The state NEA and/or AFT affiliate and state/country agency are responsible for the costs of their respective observer or state consultant;
2. The state agency (or relevant government agency for international EPPs) appoints its consultants;
3. The state NEA and AFT affiliate nominates to CAEP potential observers who are actively engaged in school activities at the pre-collegiate level (e.g., elementary or secondary teacher, or administrator);
4. An EPP can veto nominated AFT and NEA representatives if it can demonstrate in writing that a potential conflict of interest exists;
5. State/international representatives and observers must meet all appropriate qualifications for services as set forth in *Policy XXI, Code of Ethics, and Policy XXII, Conflict of Interest*; and
6. State/international representatives are full participants in discussions and data gathering for the team.

POLICY XXXVIII Review and Revision of Standards

CAEP undertakes a review of its standards at least every five years. This review includes an examination of the standards' intellectual underpinnings, logic, and related policies as the natural outgrowth of the kind of culture of continuous improvement it seeks to create. For this purpose, the Board of Directors established its Standards Committee to oversee its review of standards and make recommendation of any needed changes (see *Section 3.15(d) of the CAEP Bylaws*).

POLICY XXXIX Public Disclosure and Transparency of Accreditation Information

CAEP requires accredited EPPs to provide information to the public regarding candidate performance, including candidate achievement results in terms of both specialty or discipline areas and educator preparation, as required by U.S. and state/country regulations, or whatever governmental agency regulations in the case of international EPPs, and as determined by the EPP itself. Accredited EPPs must post on their website data or a link to performance assessment summaries and other information (including websites reporting Title II data for EPPs in the United States).

CAEP shall make the following information available to the public:

1. Procedures that EPPs must follow in applying for accreditation;
2. CAEP standards and procedures used to determine accreditation status and term;
3. The names, academic and professional qualifications, employment, and organizational affiliations of the members of the Board of Directors, Council, Commissions, Appeals Committee, and CAEP staff;
4. A list of EPPs accredited by CAEP, including the their accreditation status, term of accreditation, the date of the next site visit, and degree/certification levels; and

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5. The areas for improvement and/or stipulations that led to the standard not being met for EPPs that have not met one or more standards.

Upon request, information will be made available in alternative formats. If a hard copy is requested, CAEP may request reimbursement for copying and shipping charges.

POLICY XL Use of CAEP Data in Scholarly Research

CAEP reserves the right to compile and issue data derived from accreditation documents in such a way that the identity of EPPs and individuals is not revealed. For the purposes of scholarly research, permission may be granted by the CAEP president for researchers to have access to CAEP activities, files, and EPP materials. Researchers are bound by the rules of confidentiality as stated in *Policy XXIII, Confidentiality*, and may not reveal information listed as confidential without written consent from the EPP.

POLICY XLI Third Party Comment

All EPPs are required to solicit third-party comment on the quality of the EPP's programs as part of the accreditation review process.

Both the EPP and CAEP are required to announce the upcoming site visit to communities of interest including, but not limited to, full-time and adjunct faculty/educators in the EPP, staff, candidates, cooperating teachers and/or mentors, completers, and employers prior to the scheduled date of the site visit. CAEP receives written testimony up to one month before the accreditation decision. The EPP is given the opportunity to respond to any written comments received prior to the site visit. Third-party testimony and the EPP response, if any, become part of the data that the site visit team considers as it conducts the visit.

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**Appendix A
Accreditation Decision-Making in CAEP**

