



## **CAEP STATE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

**The Mississippi Department of Education  
The Office of Teaching and Leading  
Division of Educator Preparation**

**And**

**The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation  
Partnership Agreement**

**September 2017**

Whereas, CAEP is a non-governmental, voluntary association committed to the effective preparation of teachers and other P-12 professional educators; and

Whereas, CAEP, through an autonomous Accreditation Council, accredits educator preparation providers (EPPs) and advances excellent educator preparation through evidence-based accreditation that assures quality and supports continuous improvement to strengthen P-12 student learning; and

Whereas, CAEP is a nationally recognized accreditor, having earned recognition by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), and may seek recognition by the United States Secretary of Education, and, therefore, develops policy and procedures aligned with all applicable requirements of CHEA and the U.S. Department of Education (USDEd); and

Whereas, there is established within the State Department of Education the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development. It shall be the purpose and duty of the commission to make recommendations to the State Board of Education regarding standards for the certification and licensure and continuing professional development of those who teach or perform tasks of an educational nature in the public schools of Mississippi. (Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2)

By the authority of the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development, the Office of Teaching and Leading within the State Department of Education has sole responsibility for EPP program approval.

CAEP and The Mississippi Department of Education hereby enter into this agreement detailing the State's preferences with regard to program review options and review team composition for accreditation site reviews conducted by CAEP of EPPs operating within the State, and

establishing the primary responsibilities each party has in supporting CAEP accreditation activities involving all such EPPs.

## **1. CAEP Standards and Scope of Accreditation**

The Parties understand and agree that:

- 1.1. The CAEP Board of Directors (CAEP Board or Board) has adopted standards (CAEP Standards or Standards) that serve as the basis for all accreditation reviews undertaken by CAEP. The CAEP Standards reflect the voice of the education field – on what makes a quality educator. The Standards and their components flow from two principles:
  - 1.1.1. There must be solid evidence that the education preparation provider’s graduates are competent and caring educators, and
  - 1.1.2. There must be solid evidence that the education preparation provider’s educator staff have the capacity to create a culture of evidence and use it to maintain and enhance the quality of the professional programs they offer.
- 1.2. As a result of the ongoing critical self-review that CAEP undertakes to maintain and improve the quality of CAEP accreditation, the CAEP Board will undertake a comprehensive review and revision of the CAEP Standards on a schedule set by the Board and may, as needed, make interim amendments to the Standards. In making any such changes, CAEP will seek stakeholder and public input, including input from the State and its EPPs. It is the responsibility of the State and any EPPs seeking CAEP accreditation to stay informed of any changes made to the CAEP Standards.
- 1.3. The CAEP scope of accreditation, defined in Accreditation Council policy, provides for the review of Initial Licensure Programs and Advanced Level Programs.
  - 1.3.1.1. Initial Licensure Programs are programs at the baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate level leading to initial licensure, certification, or endorsement, and that are designed to develop P-12 teachers.
  - 1.3.1.2. Advanced Level Programs are programs at the post-baccalaureate or graduate level leading to licensure, certification, or endorsement. These programs are designed to develop P-12 teachers who have already completed an initial preparation program, currently licensed administrators, or other alternately certified school professionals for employment in P-12 schools/districts.

## **2. CAEP’s Responsibility for Education Preparation Provider (EPP) Accreditation**

The Parties understand and agree that:

- 2.1. CAEP, through the Accreditation Council, has sole responsibility for granting CAEP Accreditation to an EPP, and for supporting and overseeing NCATE- and TEAC- accredited EPPs through continuous accreditation and the CAEP Eligibility processes described below.
- 2.2. The process required for national accreditation by CAEP is outlined in the policies and procedures of CAEP and the Accreditation Council, both of which may be revised from time to time. It is the responsibility of the State and any EPP seeking CAEP accreditation to

stay informed of any such changes as they may impact the CAEP accreditation process from the time of their adoption or publication.

The Parties understand and agree that:

### **3. State's Responsibility for Program Approval**

- 3.1. The State has sole responsibility for program approval. In granting program approval, the State will utilize information generated from CAEPs review of an EPP, including but not limited to an Accreditation Council decision on CAEP Accreditation and the assignment of any Areas for Improvement (AFIs) and Stipulations, as described in Accreditation Council policy. Although the State may elect to have state-specific standards and/or requirements incorporated into the CAEP review, consistent with the program review options outlined below, information gathered on these standards and requirements is to be used only for purposes of determining state approval. An EPPs attainment of or failure to attain any non-CAEP standards will have no bearing on CAEP accreditation.
- 3.2. The State will periodically review its program review requirements against the CAEP Standards and policies and will, in a timely manner, make CAEP aware of any conflicts or potential inconsistencies so that all parties to this agreement are aware of any such issues and can work constructively together to minimize any challenges that may arise from them.

### **4. Transition from NCATE and TEAC Accreditation to CAEP Accreditation**

- 4.1. Beginning January 1, 2017, CAEP ceased operation of the NCATE and TEAC Commissions.
- 4.2. Unless the State requires CAEP accreditation as a condition of State approval, EPPs holding NCATE or TEAC accreditation and meeting CAEP's requirements for continuous accreditation will not be required to meet CAEP Standards until the expiration of their current term of accreditation. All such EPPs are subject to the transition provisions described in Sections 4.2.1 to 4.2.6, below, and further defined in Accreditation Council policy.
  - 4.2.1. Annual Reports: All NCATE- and TEAC- accredited EPPs are required to submit annual reports through the duration of their current term using the CAEP annual report template provided in the Accreditation Information Management System (AIMS).
  - 4.2.2. Good Standing: An NCATE- or TEAC- accredited EPP in good standing is considered to be continuously accredited. Upon expiration of the EPP's NCATE or TEAC term of accreditation, the EPP's next accreditation review must be based on CAEP standards, policy, and handbook, and carried out using the uniform CAEP accreditation process. Any such EPP is not required to complete the CAEP application process so long as continuous accreditation is maintained.
  - 4.2.3. 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 any subsequent Accreditation Council decision stemming from such review, will be based on the NCATE standards, policies, and procedures used for the previous review.
  - 4.2.4. 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 any subsequent Accreditation Council decision stemming from such review, will be based on TEAC principles, policies, and procedures.

4.2.5. 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 Committee (ARM) of the Accreditation Council, for an accreditation review that will take place no later than Fall 2019, such review (including the site visit and panel reviews) and any subsequent Accreditation Council decision stemming from such review will be based on CAEP standards, and carried out using the same process or pathway used for the initial review, as appropriate.

4.2.6. 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 the ARM, for an accreditation review that will take place after Fall 2019, such review (including the site visit and panel review) and any subsequent Accreditation Council decision stemming from the review, will be based on the CAEP standards, policy, and handbook.

4.3. 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, policy, and handbook, and carried out using the uniform CAEP accreditation process.

## **5. CAEP Accreditation Cycle**

The Parties understand and agree that:

5.1. The CAEP accreditation cycle involves an EPP in continuous improvement and requires an EPP to demonstrate that it meets the high standards of quality required to improve P-12 student learning.

5.2. Subject to the provisions of Section 4.2, above, to merit full accreditation by CAEP, an EPP must meet all CAEP Standards on the basis of sufficient and accurate evidence.

5.3. An EPP seeking CAEP accreditation, either as an initial applicant or through a renewal process (generally referred to as continuous accreditation), must complete a self-study process leading to an EPP's production of a Self-Study Report (SSR), a Formative Review, and Site Visit. An EPP may elect to participate in the review panel deliberations. Additional details of the CAEP accreditation process are included in Accreditation Council policy.

5.4. A Site Visit, carried out by a Site Visit Team, is an essential part of the accreditation process. Members of the assigned team investigate the quality of an EPP's evidence, including the accuracy and consistency of the evidence provided in relation to CAEP Standards. During a two- to three-day Site Visit, the Site Visit Team reviews evidence, data, and pedagogical artifacts (e.g., lesson plans, student work samples, videos) assembled by the EPP. The Site Visit Team also interviews EPP leaders, faculty, mentor teachers, candidates, students, P-12 administrators, and others relevant stakeholders.

5.5. The Mississippi Department of Education elects that CAEP's reviews of EPPs in the State be carried out using Site Visit Teams composed as follows: The Mississippi Department of

Education, through this agreement, allows site visit teams to be comprised of a **Joint Review Team**. The Joint Site Visit Team includes national site visitors appointed by CAEP and state site visitors appointed by the State. The State shall provide CAEP with its list of site visitors within any timelines established by CAEP in the Accreditation Council policy and handbook. CAEP-appointed members must make up more than 50 percent of the team. The team is led by a Site Visit Team chair appointed by CAEP. The State may appoint a vice-chair. Prior to assignment to any Site Visit Team, an individual must have successfully completed CAEP training for Site Visit Team members and must acknowledge understanding of an agreement to adhere to CAEP's code of conduct, including with regard to confidentiality and conflicts of interest.

5.5.1. **CAEP Only Team.** The Site Visit Team is appointed by CAEP using highly trained national site visitors. Prior to assignment to any Site Visit Team, an individual must have successfully completed CAEP training for Site Visit Team members and must acknowledge understanding of and agreement to adhere to CAEP's code of conduct, including with regard to confidentiality and conflicts of interest.

5.5.2. **Joint Review Team.** The Joint Site Visit Team includes national site visitors appointed by CAEP and state site visitors appointed by the State. The State shall provide CAEP with its list of site visitors within any timelines established by CAEP in the Accreditation Council policy and handbook. CAEP-appointed members must make up more than 50 percent of the team. The team is led by a Site Visit Team chair appointed by CAEP. The State may appoint a vice-chair. Prior to assignment to any Site Visit Team, an individual must have successfully completed CAEP training for Site Visit Team members and must acknowledge understanding of and agreement to adhere to CAEP's code of conduct, including with regard to confidentiality and conflicts of interest.

5.5.3. **Concurrent Team.** The Concurrent Team includes two teams of site visitors that operate independently of one another – one appointed by the State and one appointed by CAEP. The State's team reviews evidence for alignment with State standards, policies, and requirements, as appropriate. The CAEP Site Visit Team's review is focused exclusively on evidence aligned to the CAEP Standards. When possible, to minimize the burden on an EPP, the two teams will conduct their review at the same time and with as much coordination of activities as is feasible.

5.6. Prior to assignment to any CAEP Site Visit Team, an individual must have successfully completed CAEP training for Site Visit Team members and must acknowledge understanding of an agreement to adhere to CAEP's code of conduct, including with regard to confidentiality and conflicts of interest.

5.7. Each Site Visit Team shall include a P-12 practitioner, when possible. The State will make recommendations for P-12 practitioners through the CAEP Accreditation Information Management System (AIMS).

5.8. At the discretion of the State, the State's teachers' association(s) may appoint one (1) representative per association to observe the site review. Any expenses associated with the attendance of an observer must be covered by the association(s) or State. Prior to

participation, any observer must acknowledge understanding of an agreement to adhere to CAEP's policies and procedures regarding site visits and the CAEP Code of Conduct, including with regard to confidentiality and conflicts of interest.

5.9. All site visit activities undertaken by a CAEP Site Visit Team will be conducted in accordance with the policies and procedures of CAEP and the Accreditation Council.

5.10. CAEP, is not responsible for site visit expenses for state-assigned personnel.

5.11. An EPP that is subject to the jurisdiction of Mississippi may choose from among any of the following program review options for CAEP accreditation: Mississippi, through this agreement, selects the State Review by State Authority. The MDE conducts program reviews for purposes of state approval and to inform CAEP accreditation. EPPs will adhere to the State Review option and will follow State guidelines. The MDE provides forms and instructions on how to meet all state standards for licensure/certificate program approval. Upon an EPP's completion of the MDE authority forms, trained reviewers are selected and assigned within appropriate content areas. Reviewers make recommendations for further action and/or approval. The MDE makes the final decision on the approval of any program.

**5.11.1. CAEP Program Review with National Recognition.** The goal of the CAEP Program Review with National Recognition is to align specialty licensure area data with national standards developed by specialized professional associations (SPAs) in order to receive national recognition at the program level. CAEP accreditation will be made on the basis of CAEP standards. The State will review the program review report and will make a decision on continued state approval.

**5.11.2. CAEP Program Review with Feedback.** Evidence for the Program Review with Feedback process is developed through the analysis of an EPP's specialty licensure data, disaggregated by licensure area as required for CAEP Standard 1. CAEP's review of Standard 1 is the basis for feedback to the State on both the alignment of evidence with state standards and the disaggregated results. The State will decide how to use the feedback in its decision making.

**5.11.3. State Review by State Authority.** The State conducts program reviews for purposes of state approval and to inform CAEP accreditation. An EPP selecting the State Review option will follow State guidelines. The State provides forms and instructions on how to meet all state standards for licensure/certificate program approval. Upon an EPP's completion of the State authority forms, trained reviewers are selected and assigned within appropriate content areas. Reviewers make recommendations for further action and/or approval. The State makes the final decision on the approval of any program.

5.12. The specific timeline established for the review of an EPP, as well CAEP's consideration of any request for an extension, will be decided by CAEP and the Accreditation Council, as appropriate, on a case by case basis and in accordance with CAEP and Accreditation

## **Council policies.**

- 5.13. Once granted full CAEP accreditation, an EPP's term of accreditation shall be seven (7) years. Throughout this term, in order to maintain accreditation, an EPP must comply with CAEP and Accreditation Council policies, including policies regarding payment of annual dues and the submission of annual reports.
- 5.14. **An EPP for which the Accreditation Council issues a decision to deny or revoke accreditation may have a right to petition or an appeal subject to Appeal Council policy.**
- 5.15. **The State will provide to CAEP its policy leading to a "Change in State Status." The State will notify CAEP within thirty (30) days of action taken when a CAEP accredited EPP has had a "Change in State Status" as a result of a decision on specialized professional program (SPA) status by the State.**
- 5.16. Accreditation-specific terminology and definitions used by CAEP as part of its EPP review and accreditation processes may vary from similar terms and definitions used by the State. Any definitions of key terms and glossaries created by CAEP are available on the CAEP website. The State should inquire with CAEP about the definition of any term if there is uncertainty regarding its meaning in the CAEP accreditation context.

## **6. Opportunities for State Input**

The Parties understand and agree that:

- 6.1. CAEP will afford the State multiple opportunities to provide CAEP, the Site Visit Team, and members of the Accreditation Council with any information or data the State deems relevant to the accreditation of an EPP, as follows:
  - 6.2. As described in Section 5.5.2, above, the State may elect to appoint members of the CAEP Site Visit Team.
  - 6.3. At least sixteen (16) weeks prior to any scheduled Site Visit, CAEP will give the State notice of the upcoming visit. At any time, up to six (6) weeks before the scheduled visit, the State may provide CAEP with comments and information on the EPP for consideration by the Site Visit Team. EPPs will be given an opportunity to respond to any such comments prior to the Site Visit.
  - 6.4. At any time, the State may file a complaint regarding an EPP with the Accreditation Council for investigation and consideration as part of the EPP's ongoing cycle of CAEP accreditation.
  - 6.5. In the event an EPP within the State petitions for the appeal of an adverse action of the Accreditation Council, CAEP will notify the state that such petition has been received. Any notification of a decision made by an appeal panel will be made in accordance with Section 7, below, and the detailed notification provisions included in Accreditation Council policy.

## **7. Decisions of the Accreditation Council and Appeals Council**

The Parties understand and agree that:

- 7.1. The Accreditation Council makes decisions regarding the accreditation of EPPs at regularly scheduled meetings held two times each year.
- 7.2. Following any decision of the Accreditation Council to deny or revoke the accreditation of an EPP, the EPP is promptly informed of its option to file a petition for an appeal and the requirements for qualifying to have an appeal considered by CAEP's Appeals Council. Appeals criteria and process information are included in Appeals Council policy.
- 7.3. CAEP provides written notice of each decision of the Accreditation Council and Appeals Council to the State and the following individuals and entities:
  - United States Secretary of Education (only if required subsequent to CAEP achieving recognition by the U.S. Secretary of Education) or relevant government agency for international EPPs
  - Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)
  - Other State licensing or authorizing agency representatives, as appropriate
  - Appropriate accrediting agencies, including national, regional, and specialized accrediting agencies
  - Relevant state affiliates of the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
- 7.4. In the event of a final decision to deny or revoke accreditation, CAEP's written 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 wish to make with regard to the decision, or evidence that the affected EPP has been offered the opportunity to provide official comment.
- 7.5. The written notice CAEP provides regarding its accrediting decisions, made in accordance with the requirements of Federal regulations (34 CFR Part 602), includes notice to the appropriate State licensing or authorizing agency which may be a party to this agreement. Specifically, such notice will be provided no later than thirty (30) days following a decision to award initial accreditation or to renew or continue accreditation. In the event of a final decision to place an EPP on probation or to deny or terminate accreditation of an EPP, 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 30 days after the decision is reached. Within 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.

## **8. Data Sharing**



The Parties understand and agree that:

- 8.1. The CAEP Standards and process for CAEP accreditation require an EPP to collect and share data. To the extent that the State maintains data necessary for CAEP's review of an EPP, subject to any data sharing agreement that may exist between an EPP and the State, CAEP expects that the State will make the relevant data available to CAEP at no cost, in a timely manner, with all personally identifiable information removed or redacted, and with all appropriate permissions to use the data for CAEP accreditation activities.
- 8.2. In order to facilitate the reviews necessary for CAEP accreditation, CAEP will provide the State and each dues paying EPP in the State with access to AIMS, CAEP's data and information management system. Should the State or any EPP fail to pay annual dues to CAEP in a timely manner, CAEP reserves the right to suspend access to AIMS until any outstanding dues are paid.
- 8.3. CAEP policies and the AIMS site include information on the confidential nature of information maintained within AIMS. All AIMS users must acknowledge CAEP's confidentiality policy and agree to adhere to it.

## **9. Partnership Dues, State Benefits, and Fees for Additional Services**

The Parties understand and agree that:

- 9.1. The State will be responsible for payment of annual State Partnership dues (See Appendix A). Dues may be reviewed and updated annually by CAEP. Should the amount of the State's annual State Partnership dues be changed during the term of this agreement, CAEP will notify the State of the new dues amount and the effective date.
- 9.2. CAEP will provide up to three (3) individuals employed by the State with access to AIMS.
- 9.3. During each year covered by this agreement, CAEP will waive the CAEP Conference registration fee for one (1) designated State representative; however, the State or State representative must assume other expenses associated with attending the conference.
- 9.4. During each year covered by this agreement, CAEP will assume all expenses for one (1) designated State representative to attend the annual CAEP Clinic. A registration fee will be assessed for any, additional State staff and they must assume other expenses associated with attending the clinic.
- 9.5. CAEP will collaborate with the State to plan, design and implement training opportunities for Site Visitor Team members. CAEP offers states access to CAEP National Training for up to five site reviewers a year, including training and travel. (Additional participants may be added based on need and on a cost recovery basis) CAEP may also offer supplemental training opportunities for state reviewers. Supplemental training events that are arranged, including events in the state, will be

provided by CAEP on a cost-recovery basis and with specific arrangements negotiated according to CAEP's policies regarding fees and expenses for training.

9.6. The State will work with associations that represent P-12 educators (NEA, AFT, NBPTS), education preparation providers, and education administrators to establish credit toward continuing education units or professional development requirements at the local district level in return for the State's P-12 educators' professional contributions to the work of CAEP as Site Visit Team members or program reviewers.

## **10. State and CAEP Contacts**

The Parties understand and agree that:

10.1. The State will designate a liaison to serve as the primary contact for CAEP throughout the term of this agreement.

10.2. CAEP will designate a liaison to serve as the primary contact for the State through the term of this agreement.

## **11. Agreement Term and Amendments**

The Parties understand and agree that:

11.1. CAEP and the State enter into this partnership agreement for the three (3)-year period beginning September 1, 2017 and ending on September 30, 2020.

11.2. The Parties will review this agreement at least annually and, as necessary, propose any amendment deemed appropriate and which may be adopted upon the agreement of the Parties.

11.3. Should any provision of this agreement be determined to be in conflict with CAEP policy, including the policies of the Accreditation Council and Appeals Council, CAEP policy will be the prevailing authority and this agreement will be required to be amended to resolve the conflict.

11.4. Notwithstanding the annual review described above, this agreement may be modified by consent of the Parties at any point.

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Christopher Koch, President  
Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation

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DATE

By signing this agreement, the undersigned agrees to be bound by the terms outlined above, and affirms that he or she has the authority to enter into this agreement on behalf of the State.

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Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.  
Mississippi State Superintendent of Education

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DATE

## **Appendix A: State Dues Structure**

Beginning in FY18 (July 1, 2017), a new State Partnerships dues structure take effect. The new structure more fairly aligns and delineates (1) the collective resources required to service state partners in conjunction with their respective EPPs (fixed and proportional amounts), and (2) the variable resources required to administer the CAEP-state joint visits for states that choose to participate in the joint CAEP Accreditation processes (variable amount).

Annual costs for supporting activities associated with state partnerships have both fixed and proportional components which include costs associated with the CAEP Clinic, CAEP fall and spring conferences, staff time, technology costs for maintaining workspaces within CAEP's Accreditation Information Management System (AIMS), and other indirect expenses.

For the fixed and proportional amounts, states would be assessed \$2,750 annually to cover expenses for the spring convening and conference registration plus a portion of indirect expenses which are based on the actual percentage of CAEP member EPPs within each state.

For example:

State A has 20 CAEP member EPPs, or 2.2% of total CAEP EPPs. The proportional amount will be set at 2.2% of \$315,000 (current total), or \$6,900. Therefore, the total fees for State A will be: \$2,750 (fixed) + \$6,900 (variable) = \$9,650.

\* This represents the dues structure in effect at the time this agreement is entered into by the Parties. CAEP reviews the dues structure annually and reserves the right to adjust the State's annual dues as needed to ensure that all costs of CAEP's accreditation activities are adequately covered. CAEP will notify the State upon the adoption of any changes to this structure and the data on which any new dues structure will take effect.