

CAEP STATE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

Georgia Professional Standards Commission and The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation Partnership Agreement November 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, the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (Georgia or the State) promotes excellence in educator preparation through the coordination of national educator preparation provider accreditation reviews and Georgia program approval;

CAEP and Georgia (the Parties) hereby enter into this agreement detailing the State's preferences with regard to program review options and site 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 valid and reliable evidence that the educator preparation provider's graduates are competent and caring educators, and
 - 1.1.2. There must be valid and reliable evidence that the educator 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. CAEP will disseminate information regarding changes in a timely manner.
- 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, other certificated (or similar State language) school professionals for employment in P-12 schools/districts. Degree-only programs that provide enhanced content in fields in which candidates are already certified are not reviewed by CAEP or GaPSC.

See Georgia-specific definitions of initial, advanced, and endorsement programs in Appendix B (page 12).

2. CAEP’s Responsibility for Educator 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-accredited EPPs in good standing 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.

3. State’s Responsibility for Program Approval

The Parties understand and agree that:

- 3.1. The State has sole responsibility for program approval. In granting program approval, the State may utilize information generated from CAEP’s 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 the purposes of determining State approval. An EPP's attainment of or failure to attain any non-CAEP standards will have no bearing on CAEP accreditation.

- 3.2. The State will periodically examine 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.
- 3.3. Regardless of what program review option is required by the State, EPPs must provide information for Standard One in the Self-Study Report, at least nine months prior to a Site Visit.

4. Transition from NCATE Accreditation to CAEP Accreditation

The Parties understand and agree that:

- 4.1. Beginning January 1, 2017, CAEP ceased operation of the NCATE Commission.
- 4.2. Unless the State requires CAEP accreditation as a condition of State approval, EPPs holding NCATE 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 4.2.5, below, and further defined in Accreditation Council policy.
 - 4.2.1. Annual Reports: All NCATE-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-accredited EPP in good standing is considered to be continuously accredited. Upon expiration of the EPP's NCATE 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. Extensions Granted for Reviews Taking Place up to Fall 2019: For any NCATE-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.
 - 4.2.5. Extensions Granted for Reviews Taking Place After Fall 2019: For any NCATE-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 a Site Visit. An EPP may elect to participate in the Accreditation Council 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 team, is an essential part of the accreditation process. Members of the assigned site 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 team reviews evidence, data, and pedagogical artifacts (e.g., lesson plans, student work samples, videos) assembled by the EPP. The site team also interviews EPP leaders, faculty, mentor teachers, candidates, students, P-12 administrators, and other relevant stakeholders.
- 5.5. The State elects that CAEP's reviews of EPPs in the State will be carried out using site teams composed as follows:
 - 5.5.1. **Joint Review Team.** The Joint Review 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 State Site Visitors within any timelines established by CAEP in the Accreditation Council policy and handbook. CAEP-appointed Site Visitors must make up more than 50 percent of the team. The team is led by a Lead Site Visitor (chair) appointed by CAEP. The State may appoint a designated *State* Lead Site Visitor to be a member of the site team under the leadership of the CAEP Lead Site Visitor. Should the State deem it necessary to have more State Site Visitors participate in an off-site or onsite visit to accommodate the work involved in reviewing a high number of programs, those State Site Visitors exceeding the 49% threshold will serve as observers and provide input regarding findings when requested by the CAEP or State Team.

- 5.6. Prior to assignment to any CAEP joint site team, an individual must successfully complete CAEP national training for Site Visitors 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 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 Visit. 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 site 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 Georgia may choose either of the following program review options for CAEP accreditation:
 - 5.11.1. **Specialized Professional Association (SPA) Review with National Recognition.** The goal of the SPA 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. The site team will consider the National Recognition decision available in SPA program level reports as evidence to meet the sufficiency criteria related to CAEP Standard 1.
 - 5.11.2. **State Review by State Authority.** The State conducts program reviews for the purposes of State approval and informs CAEP accreditation. An EPP selecting the State Review option will follow State guidelines. The State provides a platform (the Provider Reporting System: PRS-II) and guidance on how to address Standard 1 and Georgia-specific Standard 6 for program approval. Upon an EPP's completion of PRS-II, GaPSC-trained Site Visitors are selected and assigned. Site Visitors make recommendations for further action and/or state approval. The joint site team will utilize all state reports and evidence provided in support of the state program approval review process, which coincides with the EPP accreditation review process. The State makes the final decision on the approval of any program as it relates to State policy and requirements. (See Appendix B.)
- 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 to seek 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 by a Specialized Professional Association (SPA) or a decision 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 CAEP will afford the State multiple opportunities to provide CAEP, the site team, and members of the Accreditation Council with any information or data the State deems relevant to the accreditation of an EPP, as follows:

- 6.1. As described in Section 5.5.1, above, the State may elect to appoint members of the CAEP site team.
- 6.2. At any time up to six (6) weeks before the scheduled visit, the State may provide CAEP with responses to public comment regarding the EPP for consideration by the site team. EPPs will be given an opportunity to respond to any such comments prior to the Site Visit.
- 6.3. At any time, the State may file a complaint with the Accreditation Council regarding an EPP for investigation and consideration as part of the EPP's ongoing cycle of CAEP accreditation.
- 6.4. 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. The State will be notified of changes in dues no later than March 1 prior to the subsequent fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) when the new dues amount will become effective.
- 9.2. CAEP will provide up to six (6) 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 the additional individual(s) must assume other expenses associated with attending the clinic.
- 9.5. CAEP offers states access to CAEP National Training for up to five (5) site reviewers per year, including training and travel. (Additional participants may be added based on need, space availability, 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.

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 on November 15, 2017 and ending on November 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.

Christopher Koch, President
Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation

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.

State Authority

DATE

Appendix A: State Dues Structure

Beginning in FY18 (July 1, 2017), a new State Partnerships dues structure takes 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.

Appendix B: GaPSC/CAEP Joint Site Visitor Team Working Agreement

The following policies regarding expectations during Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) reviews have been developed to guide the implementation of GaPSC/CAEP joint visits. The policies provide the framework for a balanced, collaborative relationship between the CAEP and GaPSC team members, and emphasize the importance of developing working norms that address the review of both the EPP and its programs.

Prior to the Formative Review:

1. All program data will be finalized in GaPSC's Provider Reporting System (PRS-II) ten months prior to the onsite review.
2. The Self-Study Report will be uploaded into CAEP's Accreditation Information Management System (AIMS) nine months prior to the onsite review.
3. The State Consultant will identify the number of GaPSC State Appointed Program Reviewers (SAPRs) needed for the review of EPP programs under Standard 1. This number of SAPRs needed is determined by the number of programs offered by the EPP. (One SAPR per five programs/certification fields is the typical metric used.)
4. GaPSC Site Visitors who will participate in the onsite review will be nationally trained on their roles for a GaPSC/CAEP joint review.
 - a. SAPRs will coordinate with the GaPSC Site Visitor on the CAEP Site Team to provide documentation on the state status of programs reviewed.
 - b. Any SAPR not officially on the CAEP Joint Site Team may be asked to provide input on matters related to EPP findings.
5. The State Consultant may initiate and facilitate a meeting with the National Lead and the GaPSC State Lead to establish communication, as well as an understanding of the Georgia protocols and this working agreement.
6. All SAPRs will be given access to AIMS (to review the Self-Study Report) and PRS-II (to review program-level data).
7. The State Consultant will schedule and facilitate collaborative conversations for all SAPRs, such as joint orientation to roles and protocols, and joint technology orientation.
8. To ensure equitable workloads, the State Consultant will facilitate a conversation with the National Lead and the State Lead, confirming joint responsibility for establishing data review plans, writing assignments, and work schedules.
 - a. All relevant SiteTeam correspondence should be shared by the National Lead, the State Lead, and the State Consultant (including polls of experience, interests, writing preferences, etc.).
 - b. All Site Visitors will receive writing assignments.
 - c. All Site Visitors are expected to carefully read the entire Self-Study Report.

- d. All GaPSC Site Visitors are expected to carefully read the assigned program reports and related evidence.
- e. The participation of any Observer shall be in adherence with Accreditation Council Policy including but not limited to Policy 7.08 Observers on Site Teams and Site Visits.

Georgia-Specific Definitions: Georgia's definition of Initial Preparation and Advanced Preparation are based upon an important distinction between the terms "Preparation" and "Degree;" the terms are not synonymous. As is described in the definitions below, initial preparation can occur through an advanced degree program. Therefore, in Georgia, the use of the term "Initial Preparation" does not relate only to baccalaureate-level degree programs. In addition, endorsement programs are neither advanced nor initial preparation. Each is defined below.

1. **Initial Preparation Program:** A program designed to prepare candidates for their first professional certificate in a teaching, leadership, or service field. Examples include degree programs at the baccalaureate, master's, or higher levels; or post-baccalaureate programs and non-degree certification-only programs. Programs leading to an educator's first certificate in a particular field are considered initial preparation even if the educator is certified in one or more other fields.
2. **Advanced/Degree-Only Program:** An educator preparation program at the post-baccalaureate level for the continuing education of educators who have previously completed initial preparation and are certified in the program's subject area or field of certification. Advanced preparation programs commonly award graduate credit and include master's, specialist, and doctoral degree programs.
3. **Endorsement:** A planned sequence of courses and experiences, typically three (3) to four (4) courses in length, designed to provide certified educators with an additional, specific set of knowledge and skills, or to expand and enhance existing knowledge and skills. Successful completion of an endorsement program results in the addition of the endorsement field to the Georgia educator certificate.