

**Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE)
and
The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation
Partnership Agreement**

Whereas, CAEP (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation) is a non-governmental, voluntary association committed to the effective preparation of teachers and other PK-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 PK-12 student learning; and

Whereas, CAEP is a nationally recognized accreditor, having earned recognition by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), and is seeking 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 (USED); and

Whereas, the Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE) is the state education authority that is responsible for granting new and continuing state program approval of Connecticut EPPs; and

Whereas, all Connecticut EPPs are required to be nationally accredited through CAEP and to host a CAEP on-site visit every seven years to determine reaccreditation status; and

NOW THEREFORE, CAEP and the CSBE hereby enter into this Agreement detailing the CSBE's preferences with regard to program review options and review team composition for CAEP accreditation site reviews conducted of EPPs and establishing the primary responsibilities each party has in supporting CAEP accreditation activities involving all such EPPs.

1. Definitions.

- 1.1. Accreditation. Official certification that a school or program has met standards set by external regulators.
- 1.2. Accreditation Council. CAEP's authoritative body that performs accreditation of educator preparation programs. The Accreditation Council determines the accreditation status of EPPs with the exception of any final accreditation decision made by an Ad-Hoc Appeals Panel, and appoints volunteers to serve in roles related to its accreditation process.
- 1.3. Educator Preparation Provider.
- 1.4. Accreditation Information Management System (AIMS)

2. CAEP Standards and Scope of Accreditation. The Parties hereby understand and agree that:

- 2.1. The CAEP Board of Directors has adopted CAEP 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 CAEP standards and their components are based on two principles:

- 1.1.1. There must be solid evidence that the EPP's graduates are competent and caring educators, and;
 - 1.1.2. There must be solid evidence that the EPP'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.
 - 2.2. At the time of this Agreement's drafting, a review of such standards is taking place and draft standards have been released to states for comment. Final standards are anticipated to be approved by the CAEP Board in December of 2020. It is the responsibility of the CSBE and any EPPs seeking CAEP accreditation to stay informed of any changes made to the CAEP standards.
 - 2.3. The CAEP scope of accreditation, defined in the Accreditation Council's policy, provides for the review of initial licensure programs and advanced level programs:
 - 2.3.1. Initial licensure programs are programs at the baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate level leading to initial licensure, certification, or endorsement and are designed to develop PK-12 teachers.
 - 2.3.2. Advanced level programs are programs at the post-baccalaureate or graduate level leading to licensure, certification, or endorsement. These programs are designed to develop PK-12 teachers who have already completed an initial preparation program, currently licensed administrators, and other certificated school professionals for employment in PK-12 schools/districts.

3. CAEP's Responsibility for Education Preparation Provider Accreditation. The Parties understand and agree that:

- 3.1. CAEP, through the Accreditation Council, has sole responsibility for granting CAEP accreditation to an EPP and for supporting and overseeing continuous accreditation and CAEP eligibility processes for EPPs that hold either National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) or Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) accreditation.
- 3.2. 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 CSBE 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.

4. CSBE's Responsibility for Program Approval. The Parties understand and agree that:

- 4.1. The CSBE has sole responsibility for new and continuing program approval. In granting program approval, the CSBE shall base its decision upon information generated from CAEP's review of an EPP in conjunction with state-specific evaluation information. Although the CSBE may elect to have state-specific standards and/or requirements incorporated into the CAEP review process consistent with the program review options outlined below, information gathered on these standards and requirements is to be used only for the purpose of determining state approval. An EPP's attainment of or failure to attain any non-CAEP standards shall have no bearing on CAEP accreditation.
- 4.2. The CSBE shall periodically review its program review requirements against the CAEP standards and policies and shall, 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.

5. Transition from NCATE and TEAC Accreditation to CAEP Accreditation.

- 5.1. Beginning January 1, 2017, CAEP ceased operation of the NCATE and TEAC Commissions.
- 5.2. EPPs holding NCATE or TEAC accreditation and meeting CAEP's requirements for continuous accreditation shall 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 5.2.1 to 5.2.2, below, and further defined in Accreditation Council policy.
 - 5.2.1. 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 AIMS.
 - 5.2.2. Good Standing: An NCATE- or TEAC-accredited EPP in good standing shall be 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 such review shall be conducted using the uniform CAEP accreditation process. Any such EPP is not required to complete the CAEP application process if it maintains continuous accreditation.
- 5.3. Any accreditation review scheduled to take place during and after fall 2020, whether for a new applicant, for continuing accreditation, or for accreditation following an approved extension shall be based on the CAEP standards, policy, and handbook, and carried out using the uniform CAEP accreditation process.

6. CAEP Accreditation Cycle. The Parties understand and agree that:

- 6.1. 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 PK-12 student learning.
- 6.2. Subject to the provisions of Section 5.2, above, to attain full accreditation by CAEP, an EPP must meet all CAEP standards on the basis of sufficient and accurate evidence.
- 6.3. An EPP seeking CAEP accreditation, either as an initial applicant or through continued 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 (which may also be referred to as an Evaluation and conducted, in accordance with CAEP policies, on-site or virtually). An EPP may elect to participate in the review panel deliberations. Additional details of the CAEP accreditation process are included in the Accreditation Council's policy.
- 6.4. A Site Visit, carried out by a Site Visit Team (which may also be referred to as an Evaluation 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, PK-12 administrators, and others relevant stakeholders.
- 6.5. The CSBE elects that CAEP's reviews of EPPs in Connecticut shall be carried out using Site

Visit Teams composed as follows:

- 6.5.1. CAEP Only Team. The Site Visit Team shall be 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 an understanding of and agreement to adhere to CAEP's Code of Conduct, including but not limited to the provisions pertaining to confidentiality and conflicts of interest.
- 6.5.2. Each Site Visit Team may include a PK-12 practitioner.
- 6.5.3. At the discretion of the CSBE, the Connecticut's teachers' and administrators' professional 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). Prior to participation, any observer must agree to adhere to CAEP's policies and procedures regarding site visits and the CAEP Code of Conduct, including but not limited to the provisions related to confidentiality and conflicts of interest.
- 6.6. All Site Visit activities undertaken by a CAEP Site Visit Team shall be conducted in accordance with the policies and procedures of CAEP and the Accreditation Council.
- 6.7. CAEP shall not be responsible for Site Visit expenses for state-assigned personnel.
- 6.8. An EPP that is subject to the jurisdiction of the CSBE may choose from among any of the following program review options for CAEP accreditation:
 - 6.8.1. Specialty 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. 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. The CSBE will decide how to use the SPA feedback in its decision making regarding state program approval.
 - 6.8.2. CAEP Evidence Review of Standard 1. Evidence for the CAEP Evidence Review of Standard 1 process is developed through the analysis of an EPP's outcome assessment data aligned to those standards delineated in CAEP Standard 1. CAEP's Evidence Review of Standard 1 provides information to the CSBE on both the alignment of evidence with state standards and the disaggregated results. The CSBE shall determine how to use this review of evidence in its decision-making regarding state program approval.
- 6.9. The specific timeline established for the review of an EPP, as well CAEP's consideration of any request for an extension, shall 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.
- 6.10. 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 but not limited to the policies regarding payment of annual dues and the submission of annual reports.
- 6.11. An EPP for which the Accreditation Council issues a decision to deny or revoke accreditation shall have the right to petition or an appeal subject to CAEP's appeals policy.
- 6.12. The CSBE shall provide to CAEP its policy leading to a "Change in CSBE Status." The

CSBE shall notify CAEP within thirty (30) days of action taken when a CAEP-accredited EPP has had a “Change in CSBE Status.”

- 6.13. 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 CSBE. Any definitions of key terms and glossaries created by CAEP are available on the CAEP website. The CSBE should inquire with CAEP about the definition of any term if there is uncertainty regarding its meaning in the CAEP accreditation context.

7. Opportunities for CSBE Input. The Parties understand and agree that:

- 7.1. CAEP shall afford the CSBE multiple opportunities to provide CAEP, the Site Visit Team, and members of the Accreditation Council with any information or data the CSBE deems relevant to the accreditation of an EPP, as follows:

7.1.1. At least sixteen (16) weeks prior to any scheduled Site Visit, CAEP shall give the CSBE notice of the upcoming visit. At any time up to six (6) weeks before the scheduled visit, the CSBE may provide CAEP with comments and information on the EPP for consideration by the Site Visit Team. EPPs shall be given an opportunity to respond to any such comments prior to the Site Visit.

7.1.2. At any time, the CSBE may file a complaint against an EPP with the Accreditation Council, which shall investigate and consider such complaint as part of the EPP’s ongoing cycle of CAEP accreditation.

7.1.3. In the event an EPP petitions for the appeal of an adverse action of the Accreditation Council, CAEP shall notify the CSBE that such petition has been received. Any such notification of a decision made by an appeal panel shall be made in accordance with Section 8 below, and the detailed notification provisions included in Accreditation Council’s policy.

8. Decisions of the Accreditation Council and Appeals Council. The Parties understand and agree that:

- 8.1. The Accreditation Council makes decisions regarding the accreditation of EPPs at regularly scheduled meetings held two (2) times each year or during any special meeting convened in accordance with CAEP policy.

- 8.2. Following any decision of the Accreditation Council to deny or revoke the accreditation of an EPP, the EPP shall be promptly informed of its option to file a petition for appeal and the requirements for qualifying to have an appeal considered by an Ad Hoc Appeal Panel. Appeals criteria and process information are included in Appeals Policy.

8.3. CAEP shall provide written notice of each decision of the Accreditation Council and any Ad Hoc Appeal Panel to the CSBE 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 Connecticut licensing or authorizing agency representatives, as appropriate
- Appropriate accrediting agencies, including national, regional, and specialized accrediting agencies
- Relevant Connecticut affiliates of the National Education Association (NEA), the

American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and the American Federation of School Administrators (AFSA)

- 8.4. In the event of a final decision to deny or revoke accreditation, CAEP's written notice shall 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.
- 8.5. 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 Connecticut 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, CAEP shall provide notice to the appropriate Connecticut 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 shall provide the appropriate Connecticut licensing or authorizing agency with written notice.

9. Data Sharing. The Parties understand and agree that:

- 9.1. The CAEP standards and process for CAEP accreditation require an EPP to collect and share data. To the extent that the CSBE maintains data necessary for CAEP's review of an EPP, subject to any data sharing agreement that may exist between an EPP and the CSBE, CAEP expects that the CSBE shall 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.
- 9.2. In order to facilitate the reviews necessary for CAEP accreditation, CAEP shall provide the CSBE and each dues paying EPP in Connecticut with access to AIMS. Should the CSBE 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.
- 9.3. 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.

10. Partnership Dues, State Benefits, and Fees for Additional Services. The Parties understand and agree that:

- 10.1. The CSBE shall be responsible for payment of its annual State Partnership dues (See Appendix A). CAEP may review and update dues annually. Should the amount of the CSBE's annual State Partnership dues be changed during the term of this Agreement, CAEP shall notify the CSBE of the new dues amount and the effective date.
- 10.2. CAEP shall provide up to three (3) individuals employed by the Connecticut State Department of Education (SDE) with access to AIMS.
- 10.3. During each year covered by this Agreement, CAEP will waive the CAEP Conference registration fee for one (1) designated SDE representative; however the SDE or the SDE representative must assume other expenses associated with attending the conference.

- 10.4. During each year covered by this agreement, CAEP shall assume all expenses for one (1) designated SDE representative to attend the annual CAEP Clinic. CAEP may assess a registration fee for any additional SDE staff, and such SDE staff must assume other expenses associated with attending the clinic.
- 10.5. CAEP offers states access to CAEP National Training for up to five Site Visit Team members per year, including training and travel costs. The CSBE may request such training for additional participants based upon 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 Connecticut, shall 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.

11. CSBE and CAEP Contacts. The Parties understand and agree that:

- 11.1. Dr. Katie Moirs shall be the CSBE-appointed CAEP liaison to serve as the primary contact for CAEP throughout the term of this Agreement: katie.moirs@ct.gov.
- 11.2. Matt Vanover will be the CAEP-appointed Connecticut liaison, serving as the primary contact for the CSBE through the term of this agreement: matt.vanover@caepnet.org.
- 11.3. The CSBE and CAEP shall promptly notify the other party of any change to the above designations.

12. Agreement Term and Amendments. The Parties understand and agree that:

- 12.1. CAEP and the CSBE enter into this Partnership Agreement for a five (5)-year period beginning December 1, 2020 and ending on November 30, 2025.
- 12.2. The Parties shall review this Agreement at least annually and, as necessary, propose any amendment deemed appropriate and which may be adopted upon mutual agreement of the Parties.
- 12.3. Should any provision of this Agreement be determined to be in conflict with CAEP policy, including the policies of the Accreditation Council, CAEP policy shall be the prevailing authority and this agreement will be required to be amended to resolve the conflict.
- 12.4. Notwithstanding the annual review described above, this Agreement may be modified by consent of the Parties at any point.

13. Cancellation. Notwithstanding any provisions in this Contract, the CSBE, through a duly authorized employee, may terminate this Agreement whenever the CSBE makes a written determination that such termination is in the best interests of the State. The CSBE shall notify CAEP in writing of termination pursuant to this section, which notice shall specify the effective date of termination.

14. Statutory Authority. The statutory authority for the CSBE to enter into this Agreement is as follows: C.G.S. Sections 4-5, and 4-8.

15. Applicable Law: This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Connecticut without regard to its principles of conflicts of laws. CAEP shall at all times comply with and observe all federal and state laws, local laws, ordinances and regulations which are in effect during the period of this Agreement and which in any manner affect the work or its conduct.

16. Sovereign Immunity: The parties acknowledge and agree that nothing in this Agreement shall be construed as a modification, compromise or waiver by the State of any rights or defenses of any immunities provided by Federal law or the laws of the State of Connecticut to the State or any of its officers and employees, which they may have had, now have or will have with respect to all matters arising out of this Agreement. To the extent that this section conflicts with any other section, this section shall govern.

17. Claims Against the State. CAEP agrees that the sole and exclusive means for the presentation of any claim against the State arising from this Agreement shall be in accordance with Chapter 53 of the C.G.S. (Claims Against the State) and CES further agrees not to initiate legal proceedings in any state or federal court in addition to, or in lieu of, said Chapter 53 proceedings.

Christopher Koch, President
Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)

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 CSBE.

Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Acting Commissioner
Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)

DATE

Appendix A: State Dues Structure

Beginning in FY18 (July 1, 2017), a new State Partnerships dues structure will take effect. The new structure more fairly aligns and delineates (1) the collective resources required to service state partners in conjunction with their respective educator preparation providers (EPPs), both 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 state partners upon the adoption of any changes to this structure and the data on which any new dues structure will take effect.