

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

Whereas, the Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE) is the state education authority, which is responsible for issuing public school teacher and administrator certificates pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) Section 10-145b and for granting state program approval of Connecticut Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs); and

Whereas, the State Department of Education (SDE) is the administrative arm of the CSBE; and

Whereas, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) is a nongovernmental, voluntary membership organization committed to the effective preparation of teachers and other P-12 professional educators; and

Whereas, CAEP, through an autonomous Accreditation Council, accredits 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

Whereas, the CSBE supports continuous improvement in educator preparation;

Now, therefore, CAEP, and the CSBE, on behalf of the SDE, (collectively referred to herein as the Parties) hereby enter into this Agreement detailing the CSBE's preferences with regard to program review options and review team composition for accreditation site reviews conducted by CAEP of EPPs and establishing the primary responsibilities each party has in supporting CAEP's accreditation activities involving all 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 a basis for all accreditation reviews undertaken by CAEP.
- 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 shall 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 shall seek stakeholder and public input, including input from the SDE and its EPPs.
- 1.3. The CAEP scope of accreditation, defined in CAEP Accreditation Council policy, distinguishes between two levels of educator preparation:

1.3.1. Initial-Licensure Preparation is provided through programs at the baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate levels leading to initial-licensure, certification, or endorsement that are designed to develop P-12 teachers. All Initial-Licensure Preparation programs within the Scope of Accreditation will be reviewed under CAEP Standards for Initial-Licensure.

1.3.2. Advanced-Level Preparation is provided through programs at the post-baccalaureate or graduate level leading to licensure, certification, or endorsement. Advanced-Level Programs are designed to develop P-12 teachers who have already completed an initial-licensure program, currently licensed administrators, and other certificated (or similar state language) school professionals for employment in P-12 schools/districts. CAEP shall review all Advanced-Level programs within the scope of accreditation pursuant to the CAEP Standards for Advanced-Level Preparation.

2. CAEP's Responsibility for 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 accredited EPPs through continuous accreditation and the CAEP eligibility processes described in the CAEP Accreditation Council policy.

2.2. The process required for accreditation by CAEP is outlined in policies and procedures. The CAEP Accreditation Council may revise its policies and procedures from time to time. It is the responsibility of the SDE 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. CSBE's Responsibility for Program Approval. The Parties understand and agree that:

3.1. The SDE has responsibility for program approval. In granting program approval, the SDE shall utilize information generated from CAEP's review(s) of an EPP, including but not limited to, an Accreditation Council's decision on CAEP accreditation and the assignment of any Areas for Improvement (AFIs) and Stipulations, as described in the CAEP Accreditation Policies and Procedures. Although the SDE may elect to have state-specific standards and/or requirements incorporated into the CAEP review, consistent with the program review options outlined below, only information gathered on an EPPs compliance with CAEP Standards and requirements shall be used by the Accreditation Council to make a decision.

The SDE shall periodically review its program review requirements against the CAEP Standards and policies and shall, in a timely manner, notify CAEP 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. CAEP Accreditation Cycle. The Parties understand and agree that:

4.1. The CAEP accreditation cycle involves an EPP in continuous improvement and requires an EPP to

demonstrate that it meets CAEP's high standards of quality required to improve P-12 student learning.

- 4.2. To merit full accreditation by CAEP, an EPP must meet all CAEP Standards on the basis of sufficient and accurate evidence.
- 4.3. A site review, carried out by an evaluation team, is an essential part of the accreditation process. Members of the assigned team shall investigate the quality of an EPP's evidence, including the accuracy and consistency of the evidence provided in relation to CAEP Standards. In accordance with the CAEP Accreditation Policies and Procedures, CAEP may utilize a virtual site review or may have one or more evaluation team members participating using electronic means.
- 4.4. The State elects that CAEP's reviews of EPPs in the State shall be carried out using evaluation teams composed as follows:
 - 4.4.1. **CAEP Only Team.** The evaluation team is appointed by CAEP using volunteers trained to carry out evaluation team duties.
- 4.5. Prior to assignment to any CAEP evaluation team, an individual must have successfully completed CAEP training for review team members (or evaluation team leaders, if applicable and must acknowledge understanding of, and agreement to, adhere to CAEP's code of conduct, including provisions related to confidentiality and conflicts of interest.
- 4.6. Each evaluation team shall include a P-12 practitioner, when possible. The SDE shall make recommendations for P-12 practitioners through the CAEP accreditation platform.
- 4.7. At the discretion of the SDE, the state teachers' associations 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 SDE. Prior to participation, any observer must acknowledge understanding of an agreement to adhere to CAEP's policies and procedures regarding site reviews and the CAEP code of conduct, including provisions related to confidentiality and conflicts of interest.
- 4.8. All site review activities undertaken by a CAEP evaluation team shall be conducted in accordance with the CAEP Board's policies and procedures.
- 4.9. CAEP is not responsible for site review expenses for state-assigned personnel.
- 4.10. An EPP may choose from among any of the following program review options for CAEP accreditation:
 - 4.10.1. Specialty Program Review with National Recognition. The goal of the specialized professional association (SPA) Program Review with National Recognition is to align specialty licensure area data with national standards developed by SPAs in order to receive national recognition at the program level. The evaluation team shall consider evidence that the EPP presents as gathered from the national recognition decision-making process and

made available in SPA program level reports to meet the sufficiency criteria related to CAEP Standard R1, Component R1.2 (Initial) and/or Standard RA.1, Component RA1.2 (Advanced).

4.10.2. CAEP Evidence Review of Standard 1/A.1. Evidence for the CAEP evidence review of Standard 1/A.1 process is developed through the analysis of an EPP's outcome assessment data aligned to specialty licensure area standards delineated in CAEP Standard R1, Component RA1.2 (Initial) and/or Standard A1, Component RA1.2 (Advanced). Evidence from the EPP's internal assessment may be used by the state to determine its alignment with state required standards in the respective area(s) of licensure to demonstrate candidates' ability to apply content and pedagogical knowledge in the area of licensure.

4.11. CAEP or the Accreditation Council shall determine, as appropriate, the specific timeline established for the review of an EPP, as well as CAEP's consideration of any request for an extension on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with the CAEP Accreditation Council policies.

4.12. Once granted full accreditation by CAEP, an EPP's term of accreditation shall be seven (7) years. Shorter terms are granted with a decision of Accreditation with Stipulations or Probationary Accreditation. Throughout its term, to maintain accreditation, an EPP must comply with CAEP policies, including policies regarding payment of annual dues and the submission of annual reports.

4.13. An EPP for which the Accreditation Council issues a decision to deny or revoke accreditation may have a right to petition for an appeal subject to the CAEP Ad-Hoc Appeal Policy.

4.14. The SDE shall provide to CAEP its policy leading to a "Change in State Status." The SDE shall 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 association (SPA) program status by the SDE.

4.15. 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 SDE. Any definitions of key terms and glossaries created by CAEP are available on the CAEP website [<http://caepnet.org/glossary>]. The State should inquire with CAEP about the definition of any term if there is uncertainty regarding its meaning in the CAEP accreditation context.

5. Opportunities for State Input. The Parties understand and agree that:

5.1. CAEP shall afford the SDE multiple opportunities to provide CAEP, evaluation teams and members of the Accreditation Council with any information or data the SDE deems relevant to the accreditation of an EPP, as provided below.

5.2. At least sixteen (16) weeks prior to any scheduled site review, CAEP shall give the SDE notice of the upcoming site review. At any time, up to six (6) weeks before the scheduled site review, the SDE may provide CAEP with comments and information on the EPP for consideration by the evaluation team. The SDE shall provide EPPs the opportunity to respond to any such

comments prior to the site review.

- 5.3. At any time, the SDE 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. In accordance with CAEP policy, adverse action may result from any such investigation.
- 5.4. In the event an EPP petitions for the appeal of an adverse action of the Accreditation Council, CAEP shall notify the SDE that such petition has been received. CAEP shall notify the SDE of a decision made by an ad-hoc appeal panel accordance with Section 6 of this Agreement and the detailed notification provisions included in CAEP Ad-Hoc Appeal Policy.

6. Decisions of the Accreditation Council and an Ad-Hoc Appeals Council. The Parties understand and agree that;

- 6.1. The Accreditation Council shall make decisions regarding the accreditation of EPPs at meetings held not less than two (2) times each year.
- 6.2. Following any decision of the Accreditation Council to deny or revoke the accreditation of an EPP, CAEP shall inform the EPP promptly of its option to file a petition for an appeal and appeal requirements. Appeals criteria and process information are included in the CAEP policies on appeals.
- 6.3. CAEP shall provide written notice of each decision of the Accreditation Council and an ad-hoc appeal panel in accordance with the CAEP Accreditation Policies and Procedures.
- 6.4. The written notice CAEP provides regarding its accrediting decisions, shall include notice to the appropriate State licensing or authorizing agency which may be a party to this agreement. CAEP's policies regarding notices specify the parties to which notice must be provided and the respective timelines for each.

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

- 7.1. The CAEP Standards and process for CAEP accreditation require an EPP to collect and share data. To the extent that the SDE 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, the SDE shall make the relevant data available to EPPs 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.
- 7.2. In order to facilitate the reviews necessary for CAEP accreditation, CAEP shall provide the SDE and each dues paying EPP with access to the CAEP accreditation platform, CAEP's data and information management system. Should the SDE or any EPP fail to pay annual dues to CAEP in a timely manner, CAEP reserves the right to suspend access to the CAEP accreditation platform until any outstanding dues are paid.
- 7.3. CAEP policies and the CAEP accreditation platform include information on the confidential nature

of information maintained within the CAEP accreditation platform. All CAEP accreditation platform users must acknowledge CAEP's confidentiality policy and agree to adhere to it.

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

9. The CSBE shall submit payment of annual State Partnership dues. Dues may be reviewed and updated annually by CAEP. Should the amount of the SDE's annual State Partnership dues be changed during the term of this agreement, CAEP shall notify the State of the new dues amount and the effective date 30 days prior to effective date.

9.1. CAEP shall provide up to three (3) SDE staff members with access to the CAEP accreditation platform.

9.2. During each year covered by this Agreement, CAEP shall waive the CAEP State Clinic and CAEP Conference registration fee for one (1) designated SDE representative; however, the SDE or SDE representative must assume other expenses associated with conference participation.

9.3. 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 and on a cost-recovery basis). CAEP may also offer supplemental training opportunities for state reviewers. CAEP shall arrange supplemental training events that are arranged, including events in the State, on a cost-recovery basis and with specific arrangements negotiated according to the CAEP Board's policies regarding fees and expenses for training.

9.4. The SDE shall consult with associations that represent P-12 educators (including, but not limited to, NEA, AFT, and NBPTS), EPPs, and education administrators to establish credit toward continuing education units or professional development requirements at the local school district level in return for the State's P-12 educators' professional contributions to the work of CAEP as site review team members.

10. State and CAEP Contacts. The Parties understand and agree that:

10.1. The SDE shall designate Lauren Tafrate (lauren.tafrate@ct.gov) to serve as the primary contact for CAEP throughout the term of this Agreement.

10.2. CAEP shall designate Matt Vanover (matt.vanover@caepnet.org) to serve as the primary contact for the SDE through the term of this Agreement.

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

11.1. CAEP and the SDE enter into this Agreement for the five (5)-year period beginning upon execution and ending on May 31, 2031.

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

Parties.

11.3. Should any provision of this agreement be determined to be in conflict with CAEP policy, CAEP policy shall be the prevailing authority, and the Parties shall amend this Agreement to resolve the conflict.

Christopher A. Koch

6/1/2026

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 CSBE.

Charlene M. Russell-Tucker

Charlene M. Russell-Tucker
Digitally signed by Charlene M. Russell-Tucker
Date: 2026.05.14 13:31:31 -04'00'

Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner
Connecticut State Department of Education

DATE

Appendix A: State Dues Structure

Annual costs for supporting activities associated with State Partnerships have both fixed and proportional components which include costs associated with the CAEP Clinic, fall and spring CAEP Conferences, staff time, technology costs for maintaining workspaces within CAEP's accreditation platform, and other indirect expenses.

For the fixed and proportional amounts, states would be assessed \$1,500 annually (reviewed on an annual basis) 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.

Connecticut FY 2026-2030 Dues

Connecticut has 16 CAEP member EPPs, or 2.75% of total CAEP EPPs.

- The fixed amount is set at \$1,500 per state.
- The proportional amount is set at 2.75% of \$325,000 (current total=services to all states) = \$8,937.50.

Therefore, the total fees for Connecticut will be:

\$1,500 (fixed) + \$8,937.50 (proportional) = \$10,473.50

Total yearly fees for Connecticut will not exceed \$12,000 without SDE approval.