

One-Year CAEP Extension Recommendation

Regulation 43-90 governs the accreditation requirements for educator preparation providers (EPPs). According to the regulation, public institutions must be nationally accredited while private institutions are encouraged to seek and obtain national accreditation. With 30 providers in the state, all but three private institutions have sought and obtained national accreditation of their educator preparation programs. The 27 providers with national accreditation have done so using the standards and requirements established by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). In July 2013, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation became the sole accrediting body for educator preparation providers. This occurred through the merging of NCATE and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC). South Carolina entered into a partnership with CAEP in September 2015. The first accreditation cycle, under the new CAEP model, is scheduled for Fall 2017.

On June 27, 2016, the Office of Educator Services received a one-year CAEP accreditation visit extension request from Winthrop University. Attached is the request from Dr. Jennie Rakestraw, Dean, College of Education at Winthrop University. The justification and rationale presented in the request is logical and concise and aligns with initiatives that allow for quality data collection needed to meet accreditation requirements set forth by CAEP. This request would move the CAEP accreditation visit for Winthrop University from Fall 2018 to Fall 2019.

The extension request from faculty at Winthrop University was shared with senior staff on July 5, 2016. Senior staff was unanimous in seeking the extension request through the State Board of Education. Further, it was recommended that all EPPs be offered a one-year CAEP accreditation extension to ensure fair practice is exercised among all of our providers. Upon State Board approval, EPPs will have until October 1, 2016, to accept or decline the one-year CAEP accreditation visit extension.

Historically, accreditation extensions have not been granted by the State Board of Education. The reason why this extension request has been favorably received by agency staff is that CAEP is a new accrediting body, replacing NCATE and TEAC. With a new accrediting body come new expectations and requirements. The accreditation standards and evidence needed to support and meet the standards has shifted dramatically. EPPs are being held to outcomes based standards that require data and evidence to demonstrate provider effectiveness. The new accreditation standards require EPPs to collect (or access) data that has not been collected in the past. Therefore, faculty within the EPPs are creating new models of data collection within their programs, schools, and colleges to ensure they are aligned with the new standards. To ensure the data are sufficiently meeting the needs of accreditation, time is needed to pilot research studies and data collection tools and then implement these methods and measures into educator preparation programs. In addition, the South Carolina Department of Education is unable to provide much of the data needed for accreditation due to the privacy and sensitivity of the data collected. So, the onus of responsibility lies solely on the EPP to collect the data needed for national accreditation. It is important to note, if an EPP is unable to provide the evidence needed to meet the standards, the Accreditation Council may impart an unfavorable accreditation decision. This could lead to the closing or termination of educator preparation programs across the state.

Should a provider accept the one year extension it is the responsibility of the provider to ensure they are meeting all of the accreditation requirements in place at the time of their newly scheduled visit. Below are the parameters providers must follow when selecting whether or not to choose the one year extension.

- An EPP requesting a one year extension will fall under all CAEP policies and procedures in effect at the time of the new accreditation visit. Of particular attention, EPPs must abide by the accreditation plan phase-in policy at the time of their site visit (CAEP Accreditation Handbook, Version 3; Appendix E: Guidelines for Submitting a Plan).
- Any EPP submitting a self-study after September 1, 2017, must include their advanced programs. EPPs with a site visit in Fall 2017 do not have to include their advanced programs in their self-study report.
- Program reports are due three years prior to a site visit.
- Annual reports will continue to be submitted to CAEP in the spring of each year.

It is the recommendation of the South Carolina Department of Education that the State Board of Education approve the one year extension request for all accreditation visits across the 30 education preparation providers.

