

South Carolina Educator Preparation Guidelines: Standards, Policies, and Procedures
Experimental or Innovative Programs

Important Note: In 2015, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) entered a partnership agreement with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), the accrediting organization formed by the merger of the state’s previous partner, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council. On February 11, 2020, the State Board of Education (SBE) formally adopted the CAEP standards as the national provider standards which South Carolina providers must meet either through a national or state accreditation review. This policy, originally approved by the SBE on August 8, 2012, has been updated to replace references to NCATE with CAEP, the current accreditation partner. The term “unit” which was used with NCATE has been replaced with term “provider” or “educator preparation provider” as consistent with CAEP terminology. Except as noted, the content of the policy remains unchanged.

Experimental or Innovative Programs

Educator preparation providers must seek advance approval to employ varied and innovative educator preparation techniques while being held accountable for producing skilled and knowledgeable teachers and other school personnel. Providers seeking approval of innovative or experimental programs leading to certification must file written notification with the SCDE’s Office of Educator Service (OES) dictating the specific area of certification or experimentation for which approval is sought. With a recommendation from the SCDE and the PRC, the SBE may approve an experimental or innovative program for a maximum of three years. An on-site evaluation team may be appointed by the OES to review the programs and report its findings to the PRC for recommendations to the SBE. After experimental and innovative programs have been successful in meeting their stated goals for three years, they may be continued as an approved component of the educator preparation program and will be reviewed as part of the state’s annual reporting and program review process and the on-site visit.