

Educator Preparation Policy and Implementation

Frequently Asked Questions

April 2016

1. What is the Tennessee Educator Preparation Policy?

The Tennessee Educator Preparation Policy was adopted by the State Board of Education in October 2014. The policy fundamentally seeks to ensure that all approved Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) meet rigorous standards established by the national accrediting agency, Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), as well as Tennessee-specific criteria.

2. What are some of the intended outcomes of this policy change? What was it attempting to improve and what impact will this policy change have?

The Tennessee Educator Preparation Policy focuses on improving the process of program approval and the review cycle by including Annual Reports with specific metrics that will be reported across EPPs. The policy provides an opportunity for the Tennessee Department of Education to conduct an Interim Review based on Annual Reports that suggest a provider or program is not meeting expectations. This will also lead to a more robust, Comprehensive Review. The specifics of each of these elements are noted below.

3. Under the new policy, how does an EPP get approved and what is the process for review?

Program Approval

The current process used to approve EPPs and their specialty area programs (SAPs) places too much focus on inputs and too little focus on outcomes and impact. The revised approval process will enable the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) to make recommendations based on outcomes and impact associated with effective teaching. There are four significant components of the review cycle:

- 1) Annual Reports:** Annual Reports present detailed, candidate-level data for each EPP, including new EPPs operating with conditional approval, every year. They provide evidence of the EPPs effectiveness, which will be used for the purpose of ongoing approval and to drive continuous improvement. The metrics of the Annual Reports will mimic the metrics of the Report Card, but Annual Reports are disaggregated.

- a. Annual Reports will include a variety of new metrics, including: recruitment and selection, placement, retention, completer satisfaction, employer satisfaction, completer outcomes (i.e., completion rates, pass rates on required assessments), and completer impact (i.e., level of effectiveness ratings, individual growth score ratings, and observation ratings).

2) Report Card: The Report Card is a high-level report produced for each EPP every year that presents aggregated data for use by external stakeholders, including schools and school systems, prospective educators, and the public. The primary purpose is to offer transparent information about EPP effectiveness.

3) Comprehensive Reviews: The Comprehensive Review provides a more holistic review of EPPs and their specialty area program (SAPs). During the Comprehensive Review, the trained review team will closely examine EPPs' Annual Reports, Report Cards, CAEP standards, Professional Education Standards, and Specialty Area Standards. For existing EPPs, a Comprehensive Review occurs every seven years. For a new EPP operating with conditional approval, a Comprehensive Review is conducted to grant full approval and must take place within five years but can take place as soon as the EPP has three years of Annual Reports.

- a. The TDOE is working with the implementation working group to develop a set of tools that will standardize the evidence collection process. By standardizing evidence collection, the TDOE can begin to identify program characteristics that are associated with the production of effective educators.

4) Interim and Focus Reviews: Interim Reviews occur when an Annual Report or series of Annual Reports indicate a provider or program is below standards. Focus Reviews occur when a provider does not meet one or more standards during the Comprehensive Review.

For example, an EPP and/or SAPs that are identified via Annual Reports as not meeting expectations will be required to participate in an Interim Review. The TDOE will facilitate an Interim Review if an EPP, cluster of SAPs, or individual SAP is performing below expectations within the period of the review cycle.

As a result of the Interim Review, the review team may make recommendations for program improvement, but there is substantial nuance that the review team will consider when recommending a course of action. For example, if an Annual Review indicates that provider A is struggling with candidate placement, the review team's recommended action will be significantly different than for provider B whose Annual Review indicates that their candidates have low levels of effectiveness in the classroom.

Note: The TDOE is in process of determining all aspects of the Interim Review. We will have those in place by the end of May 2016.

Review Cycle

For prospective EPPs: The review cycle begins when a prospective EPP applies for conditional approval. The TDOE reviews the application and issues conditional approval when all requirements are met and the proposed SAPs are aligned with the relevant standards. The new EPP may function under conditional approval for up to five years. At the five-year mark, the EPP will undergo a Comprehensive Review in order to be considered for full approval. However, the EPP may, after a minimum of three years on conditional approval (i.e., three years of Annual Reports), apply for full approval by undergoing a Comprehensive Review early. During the Comprehensive Review for full approval, the review team will consider data from the Annual Reports and additional evidence provided responding to the CAEP Standards, Professional Education Standards, and Specialty Area Standards.

For existing EPP: An existing EPP receives an Annual Report each year and a Comprehensive Review every seven years. If an Annual Report shows that an EPP is not meeting standards, they will undergo an Interim Review. If a Comprehensive Review shows that an EPP is not meeting standards, they will undergo a Comprehensive Review. There are four potential outcomes of a Comprehensive Review for an existing EPP: full approval (good for seven years), approval with minor stipulations, approval with major stipulations, and denial of approval.

Metrics: Currently, the TDOE is engaged in the development of a new set of metrics for the Annual Reports and Report Card for the fall of 2017 (*Note: the fall 2016 Report Card will reflect the same metrics as the fall 2015 Report Card*). The new metrics include: recruitment and selection, placement, retention, completer satisfaction, employer satisfaction, completer outcomes (i.e., completion rates, pass rates on required assessments), and completer impact (i.e., level of effectiveness ratings, individual growth score ratings, and observation ratings).

4. What is the timeline for the implementation of the Tennessee Educator Preparation Policy?

Per Appendix F (Implementation Plan) of the Tennessee Educator Preparation Policy 5.504, the TDOE is tasked with the following:

- Convening “an implementation working group to advise the TDOE in development of protocols, tools and benchmarks for the approval of EPPs in Tennessee and to serve as a clear and transparent line of communication between TDOE and the EPP community”
- The implementation working group (IWG) is to “be convened for eighteen months and may be extended if needed”
- The IWG is tasked with addressing “annual reporting requirements, developing primary partnerships, and developing processes for review”

The IWG began meeting in January 2015 after following the process for selection outlined in Appendix F of the Tennessee Educator Preparation Policy. In addition, the IWG has been meeting as specified in Appendix F of the Tennessee Educator Preparation Policy.

The IWG has been primarily tasked with creating a set of tools and protocols that will require programs to submit standardized evidence to assess the quality of program characteristics. To date, the IWG has produced the following:

Templates for demonstrating alignment of program components (e.g., coursework and key assessments) with InTASC standards:

- Drafts of educator (candidate) survey
- Drafts of employer survey
- EPP/LEA partnership outcomes template
- EPP/LEA primary partnership planning template
- EPP/LEA primary partnership agreement template
- EPP/LEA state-recognized partnership agreement template

During summer 2016, the TDOE will recruit EPP programs to pilot the instruments noted above. After the IWG final meeting in August, the TDOE will share all final instruments to be piloted this fall (Fall 2016) by select EPP programs to the state board in October 2016. Finally, all EPP programs will implement final instruments, evidence collection templates, and protocols noted above during Spring 2017.

In addition, the TDOE has worked collaboratively with the IWG to determine and define eight metrics that will be on the Annual Reports. The metrics are as follows:

- Recruitment and Selection
- Placement
- Retention
- Completer Satisfaction
- Employer Satisfaction
- Completer Outcomes:
 - Completion rates
 - Pass rates on required exams
- Completer Impact:
 - Level of effectiveness
 - Individual growth score ratings
 - Observations ratings

These metrics will be reported annually on the Report Card and in the Annual Reports.

5. What exactly are the Report Card and the Annual Reports? How are they alike and different and what is the purpose of each?

Report Card

The Report Card is the high-level report produced for each EPP that shares common metrics aggregated by program for use by external stakeholders. The primary purpose of the Report Card is to provide transparency about individual programs and provide a view of statewide EPP program outcomes. It is desired that districts utilize this information more readily in making

employment and partnership decisions. The revised Report Card, which will be published in fall 2017 for the first time, presents aggregated information about metrics related to the academic profile of an EPP's candidates: placement, retention, satisfaction (completer and employer), program outputs, and candidate impact (*Note: These metrics will be aligned to the Annual Reports*).

Note: The Report Card has been in existence since 2010, with an early version created for information purposes in 2009. Until 2015, the Report Card was produced by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC). It is now produced by the State Board of Education in partnership with TDOE and THEC.

Annual Reports

Annual Reports are a variation on the Report Card with significantly more detail and broken out by program area with smaller n-sizes. These highly disaggregated reports will also include candidate-level data (where feasible) to support continuous improvement and inform the ongoing evaluation of providers and their programs. These detailed reports will provide evidence for the evaluation of the effectiveness of preparation programs for the purposes of ongoing approval and to drive continuous improvement. The metrics included in the Annual Reports will mimic the metrics of the Report Card, but they are presented alongside detailed data and are calculated for individual programs, categories of programs, and at the provider level. If an Annual Report shows that EPP or SAP is not meeting expectations, they will participate in an Interim Review.

The Annual Report template, new metric definitions, and additional protocols and templates will be presented to the state board in October 2016. The first Annual Reports will be distributed to EPPs in February 2017.

6. What is the detailed timeline of data to be collected for Annual Reports under the Educator Preparation Policy as well as other key implementation milestones and events noted in this FAQ?

2016 - Q2

- April 2016: data collection for Annual Reports and Report Card begins
- April 2016: contract with vendor to develop online Report Card
- April 2016: analysis of alignment between Praxis exams and student standards
- May 2016: begin development of EPP portal
- May 2016: next meeting of the implementation working group

2016 - Q3

- June 2016: Report Card data delivered to SBE by EPPs
- Aug. 2016: final meeting of the implementation working group
- Sept. 2016: final refinement of draft protocols and tools for Comprehensive Review

2016 - Q4

- Oct. 2016: present Annual Report template, new metric definitions, and additional protocols and templates to SBE

- Oct. 2016: analysis of data for 2016 Report Card completed
- Nov. 2016: 2016 Report Card published
- Nov. 2016: pilot satisfaction surveys

2017

- Feb. 2017: release state of ed prep in TN (to become an annual publication)
- Feb. 2017: draft Annual Reports distributed to EPPs
- Feb. 2017: first educator preparation summit
- March 2017: statewide completer/employer satisfactions surveys deployed
- April 2017: publish beta version of the EPP portal
- April 2017: data collection for Annual Reports and Report Card begins
- Oct. 2017: analysis of data for 2017 Report Card with new metrics completed
- Nov. 2017: produce Report Card and Annual Reports with new metrics

7. Are there other timelines for full implementation of the Tennessee Educator Preparation Policy? When will programs be evaluated under more rigorous standards and using a more rigorous process?

The TDOE is following the timeline implemented in the policy when passed on October 2014. The following table is the timeline of implementation from Appendix F (Implementation Plan).

		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Standards for EPPs:	NCATE standards	Existing providers	Existing providers		
	CAEP standards		New providers	All providers	All providers
Standards for Specialty Area Programs:	TN licensure standards	Existing programs	Existing programs	Existing programs	
	SAP standards	New programs	New programs	New programs	All programs
Rollout of Annual Reports:	Data collected only	All providers and programs	All providers and programs	All providers and programs	
	Data collected <u>and will be used for review</u>				All providers and programs

8. Where are we in requiring a performance assessment as part of licensure requirements for all teacher candidates? What is the timeline for state board approval and program implementation?

A proposal will be presented to the State Board for first reading in July 2016 with second reading in Oct. 2016. At the July meeting, the proposal will also include recommendations for where to set the cut score based on an analysis of current edTPA data in Tennessee. Contingent on approval, performance assessments will be required for all teacher candidates (as available).

2016-17 School Year: program training, program requirement changes, notification to candidates

2017-18 School Year: piloting and partial implementation with candidates (all “juniors”/those in semester prior to student teaching/internship); analysis of edTPA results to assess pass rates and ongoing relationship to first year teacher effectiveness.

2018-19 School Year: full implementation with candidates (all licensure candidates beginning in December 2018 required to have performance assessment)

9. What is TNCompass and how does it support the implementation of the Licensure and Educator Preparation Policy implementation?

TNCompass is Tennessee’s new online educator data management system. The system will be a one-stop-shop for information related to educator licensure, evaluation, and eventually, personalized learning opportunities. Beginning in late 2015, EPPs were able to recommend candidates for initial licensure using TNCompass. In July 2016, licensure transactions will be processed entirely through TNCompass. Because the TDOE will capture more data related to educator preparation as a part of the licensure process and that data will be affiliated with evaluation data, the TDOE will be able to generate more information regarding placement, retention, satisfaction, and evaluation data related to completer from Tennessee-approved preparation providers. This data will support the development of both the Report Card and Annual Reports.

10. How are we visioning for the next stage of work?

Report Card

Over the next six months, the State Board and TDOE staff will collaborate to generate the next design iteration of the Report Card. The 2016 Report Card will maintain the existing metrics, but it will offer enhanced data visualization to support stakeholder understanding. Following the release of the enhanced Report Card and Annual Reports, along with a new publication on educator preparation, the TDOE will host a summit on the state of educator preparation in Tennessee. The summit will convene key stakeholders, including educator preparation providers, K-12 educators, and other relevant groups, including the governor’s office, state board, and SCORE. Then, in addition to the design enhancements from 2016, the 2017 Report Card will also include the new metrics (aligned to the Annual Reports).

Revising Professional Education and Literacy Standards

Over the course of the next two years, the TDOE is also engaging in a project with three educator preparation providers to consider how programs might be redesigned to ensure that all candidates, especially candidates in general education, are prepared to support *all* students. Specifically, this project will work to ensure that novice teachers are equipped to support

interventions (levels I, II, III); this work will likely lead to a revision of the professional education standards that apply to the preparation of all teacher candidates. The TDOE has also begun a process to revise literacy standards for preparation programs. This reform aligns with the TDOE and Governor Haslam and the First Lady's Ready to Read campaign and the work being conducted by the TDOE's Early Literacy Council.

Educator Preparation Portal

As a part of a grant award, the TDOE will begin to develop an Educator Preparation Portal that will facilitate the redesign of the approval and review processes outlined in this document. Ultimately, Annual Reports and Comprehensive Reviews will be managed utilizing this portal. The portal will also offer EPPs unprecedented access to complete data through an interface with the new online educator data management system, TNCompass.

Enhancing the Comprehensive Review Process

The TDOE also anticipates continuing to refine the approach to implementing the Comprehensive Review process. In addition to developing tools and protocols, the TDOE will continue to consider additional characteristics of effective preparation, including how to ensure that preparation faculty members are equipped to provide training aligned with Tennessee expectations.

Additional Questions

11. How do we know that Tennessee content areas assessments for licensure are aligned with Tennessee academic standards? In addition, how do we know that we fully measure the content a teacher must know to teach each subject for which they might be endorsed?

Currently, we have asked these questions to ETS, our vendor for Tennessee's licensure exams called PRAXIS. ETS is prepared to deliver a report demonstrating how Tennessee student standards are aligned with Praxis II assessments at such date that we set. In addition, the TDOE's internal research team is conducting more analyses to support our understanding of the relationship between Praxis assessments and educator effectiveness. It is important to note that Praxis assessments are intended to measure content knowledge, but are not intended to be used as a single measure predictive of teacher effectiveness. Thus, content assessments, such as the Praxis II series, should provide only one measure among multiple measures to support the recommendation for and subsequent issuance of a teaching license in Tennessee.

12. How do we support districts in decreasing the number of courses taught by educators who do not hold the appropriate endorsement?

First, we must understand the landscape of teachers teaching out of their endorsement area in Tennessee. We have asked our internal research team to create a report detailing this information (name and number of courses taught and number of students served by teachers teaching out of endorsement area for the last three years).

Second, we must analyze the specific demand for certain endorsement areas in which we have teachers teaching out of endorsement area. Once we have this information, we need to recommend and incentivize strategies for EPPs to create programs that lead to candidates earning more than one endorsement (i.e.: math and physics). In addition, the TDOE will reevaluate the “two out rule” (employment standard that allows teachers to teach up to two sections of one course out of their licensure) based on this initial analysis and bring this analysis and possible recommendations to the state board.

Finally, to support decreased reliance on educators teaching out of their endorsement area, the TDOE will focus on supporting the development of primary partnerships between educator preparation providers and the districts they serve. At the May meeting of the IWG, the group will consider how to set expectations for shared recruiting goals for partnerships based on an assessment of need. The TDOE will continue to develop analyses to support district projections of need related to teaching endorsements.

13. What is the progress of the new licensure policy?

The State Board of Education adopted a new licensure policy in July 2014 that focused on two main goals.

For initial licensure, teacher candidates must demonstrate competency, usually by submitting qualifying scores on required PRAXIS exams that cover pedagogical and content knowledge. In addition, educators must be recommended for the license by an educator preparation provider. This represents a shift for job-embedded candidates (formerly Transitional candidates), who would have been recommended for licensure by the employer.

For licensure renewal, teachers do not have to demonstrate effectiveness in improving student achievement, but they may use the overall level of effectiveness ratings to reach licensure advancement or renewal. While the validity period of the license is shorter, six rather than 10 years, the number of professional development points required for renewal is roughly equivalent to previous expectations.

The new licensure policy went into effect Sept. 1, 2015. The TDOE has worked to develop clear and concise guidance protocols for educators, preparation faculty and staff, as well as districts. New forms have been completed to support the transition. We anticipate transitioning the licensure process to our new online system, TNCompass over the summer. The TDOE has scheduled training opportunities for key stakeholder groups in East, Middle, and West Tennessee in late May and early June. The most significant points of transition will come for educators converting, advancing or renewing a license over the summer. The office of educator licensure has conducted multiple internal training opportunities to ensure that staff members are prepared to support educators through this process.