
Educator Preparation Providers (EPP) and Specialty Area Programs (SAP) Approvals

The Background:

This item contains action recommendations for Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs) and the Specialty Area Programs (SAPs) (SAPs are the endorsement program – e.g., Elementary Education K-5) for Bryan College, South College, and Tennessee Wesleyan University.

Comprehensive Reviews of Existing EPPs and SAPs

The Department of Education is responsible for the review of EPPs and SAPs. National accreditation reviews conducted by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and state approval comprehensive reviews facilitated by the Department occur on a seven-year cycle. EPPs may be subject to a focused review during the interim period, which may result in a status recommendation change. Action recommendations made by the Department must be approved by the State Board of Education pursuant to State Board rule 0520-02-04.

Steps in the review process include:

- Reports prepared by the EPP that respond to the CAEP national accreditation standards and state specialty area program standards;
- On-site review conducted by a state-selected and -trained on-site review team using the Tennessee Comprehensive Review Handbook and, for EPPs seeking national accreditation, a nationally selected and trained CAEP on-site team;
- On-site review report submitted to the EPP;
- EPP response (rejoinder) to the on-site review report submitted to the Department of Education;
- Evaluation of all reviews by the Tennessee Advisory Committee on Educator Preparation (ACEP); and
- Department of Education presentation of recommendations to the State Board of Education.

The Department of Education recommendations for existing EPPs and SAPs fall into one of five categories: Full Approval: Exemplary Status; Full Approval; Full Approval: Minor Stipulations; Probationary Approval: Major Stipulations; or Denial of Approval. For EPPs seeking CAEP accreditation, the initial accreditation status is translated to an EPP state approval recommendation by the Department and reviewed by the ACEP. CAEP advanced accreditation decisions are not considered in State Board recommendations as advanced-level programs are reviewed as SAPs, and each receives a separate status recommendation.

Focused Reviews

The Department of Education is responsible for the review of EPPs and SAPs. If an EPP receives a comprehensive review outcome of probationary approval: major stipulations, the EPP shall participate in a focused review within three (3) years of receiving probationary approval from the State Board.

Bryan College

This focused review took place in fall 2023. The review team concluded that the EPP meets expectations on all reviewed standards (standards 1, 4, and 5).

The provider is recommended for full approval. No SAPs were reviewed during the focused review.

South College

This focused review took place in the fall 2023. The review team concluded that the EPP meets expectations on all reviewed standards (standards 3, 4, and 5).

The provider is recommended for full approval. No SAPs were reviewed during the focused review.

EPP Status Changes

Educator Preparation Rule 0520-02-04 states that, for EPPs with full approval: minor stipulations status, the Department may recommend to the State Board removal of the minor stipulations for the remainder of the approval period of the EPP if the EPP has adequately addressed the areas in need of improvement. To be eligible for the removal of the minor stipulations, the EPP must submit to the Department a plan for addressing the areas in need of improvement; the plan is subsequently reviewed and approved by the Department. The Department requires annual progress monitoring in which the EPP submits evidence to demonstrate that progress is being made toward the action plan goals.

Tennessee Wesleyan University

TDOE Recommendation:

EPP Full Approval

Department reviewers reviewed the EPP action plan and subsequent evidence provided during annual progress monitoring reviews since 2020. The Department concluded that the EPP meets expectations in areas needing improvement and recommends removal of the minor stipulations. The EPP is recommended for a status change to full approval.

Connection to the [Master Plan](#):

This item supports the State Board's strategic focus on Teachers and Leaders outlined in the Master Plan by ensuring EPPs are reviewed regularly and held to high standards to best prepare educators.

The Recommendation:

The Department of Education recommends approval of this item on first and final reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.