

DESE–AAQEP COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

QUALITY ASSURANCE COOPERATION AGREEMENT

between the
Missouri State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
and the
Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation

This agreement establishes a framework for cooperation between the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP) with regard to quality assurance activities in support of educator preparation in the State of Missouri. The purpose of this agreement is to support quality assurance, continuous improvement, and innovation in educator preparation by entities approved by DESE as they seek and maintain national accreditation through AAQEP.

AAQEP affirms DESE's efforts to ensure quality preparation of educators to meet the needs of children, families, schools, and communities in the State of Missouri and commits to ensuring quality educator preparation by providers approved by DESE. By entering this agreement, DESE affirms AAQEP's mission of promoting and recognizing quality educator preparation that strengthens the education profession's ability to serve all students, schools, and communities.

1. Standards Used in Quality Assurance Reviews in the State of Missouri

Quality Assurance Reviews conducted by AAQEP in Missouri will be guided by the current version of the AAQEP standards (available at www.aaqep.org) and in keeping with AAQEP policy regarding the application of those standards. In conducting reviews of programs approved by DESE, AAQEP will require that all relevant Missouri standards, rules, and statutes be addressed.

In addition, providers are welcome to orient their Quality Assurance Review to other relevant professional standards (for example, those from professional associations such as the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS), the International Literacy Association (ILA), the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), etc.).

2. Scope of Quality Assurance Reviews in Missouri

AAQEP accreditation is available to providers that are approved/recognized by DESE. A provider may, at its discretion, choose to include programs of study leading to a degree or certificate designed for those intending to work as, or already working as, educational professionals as part of the scope. For such programs of study, where no state standards are available or specified, the provider shall identify any standards in addition to the AAQEP standards to which its program is aligned.

3. Quality Assurance Review Process

All Quality Assurance Reviews conducted by AAQEP will be guided by AAQEP's policies and procedures as specified in the Guide to Accreditation, available at www.aaqep.org. AAQEP's process includes an optional proposal review stage two to three years prior to a scheduled site visit. All Quality Assurance Reviews include an off-site review two months prior to each site visit, conducted virtually, which DESE staff are welcome to attend, and an on-site visit, the scope of which is determined by program size and complexity.

4. Quality Assurance Review Team Composition

AAQEP will appoint a sufficient number of Quality Review Team members to each review case to ensure that the review is carried out thoroughly and efficiently. Each AAQEP review team will include at least one educational practitioner from the State of Missouri nominated by the provider hosting the review; that practitioner will receive training and support from AAQEP. The local practitioner(s) will support the review team's understanding of and respect for the local and state educational context.

In addition to the AAQEP-appointed members, one or more DESE staff member(s) may participate as observers. Other observers, including those seeking a better understanding of the AAQEP process, may participate as agreed to by AAQEP and the host provider. The provider will be responsible for the cost of hosting state observer(s).

5. Reviewer Preparation and Qualifications

All review team members will meet AAQEP preparation and quality requirements. Reviewer training and professional learning opportunities will be made available to SEA staff at no cost (though SEA remains responsible for any travel expenses); SEA observers need not have participated in the training as a condition for joining review teams as observers.

6. Relation of Accreditation to Program Approval

DESE program approval/recognition process is required of all Missouri providers while AAQEP accreditation is an optional process that will be informed by the state process. AAQEP expects that all certification programs seeking accreditation would maintain DESE approval and would initiate a review in the event that one or more programs covered by the scope of accreditation failed to maintain ongoing approval from DESE.

6. Accreditation Decisions

AAQEP accreditation decisions are made by the AAQEP Accreditation Commission. Accreditation statuses and terms are detailed in AAQEP's Guide and policy documents, available at www.aaqep.org. Full accreditation is for a term of 7 years. Observers from DESE are welcome to attend meetings of the Accreditation Commission at which cases of Missouri providers are considered (meetings are typically conducted via video conference). Accreditation decisions, including the reports on which decisions are based and the Accreditation Commission's rationale for each decision, will be shared with the designated office at DESE, which for purposes of this agreement is a letter of notification to the Educator Preparation Unit.

7. Communication and Logistics of Collaboration

Providers seeking AAQEP accreditation will ensure that DESE is apprised of the schedule of accreditation activities, particularly of target site visit dates; providers will also send electronically a final copy of or links to the final version of their Quality Assurance Report (the self-study) to the SEA at the same time they provide it to AAQEP.

AAQEP will communicate scheduled times of off-site and on-site reviews with DESE staff and schedules for such events at least 6 months in advance. AAQEP will also apprise designated DESE staff of the schedule of Accreditation Commission meetings at which cases from Missouri providers will be considered. In addition, AAQEP will provide designated SEA staff with copies of all reports or official letters for Missouri providers generated by the review team and by the Accreditation Commission.

8. Membership

AAQEP views cooperation among accreditors, educator preparation providers, and SEAs as essential to effective quality assurance. It enters into this agreement with the intent of supporting both DESE and providers authorized by it in ensuring the preparation of excellent and effective teachers and other professional educators. DESE agrees to join AAQEP as a state member at no cost in support of these goals.

In support of shared goals, AAQEP will provide supportive services including workshops and webinars to providers in Missouri at reasonable cost. DESE staff may participate in any AAQEP activities offered within Missouri at no cost (AAQEP cannot cover travel expenses, meals, or lodging). AAQEP will also provide one DESE staff member with a no-cost registration to its Annual Quality Assurance Symposium and provide any additional DESE staff registration at the reduced member rate. In addition, DESE staff may participate in AAQEP professional learning events, including reviewer training, at no cost (travel, etc., excepted, as above).

[signature on file] 5/18/19

Mark LaCelle-Peterson *Date*
CEO and President,
Association for Advancing Quality in
Educator Preparation

[signature on file] 5/17/19

Margie Vandeven *Date*
Commissioner of Education
Missouri State Department of Elementary
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