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AAQEP Formally Recognized as National Accradiator of Educator Preparation Programs

AAQEP becomes one of three CHEA-recognized programmatic accreditors for educator preparation alongside CAEP, NAEYC

FAIRFAX STATION, Va. (May 26, 2021) – The Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP), an accrediting organization for educator preparation programs nationwide, received formal recognition this month from the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

CHEA is the only national organization focused exclusively on higher education accreditation and quality assurance. The recognition, carrying a term of seven years, signifies that AAQEP meets CHEA’s recently revised standards for attending to academic quality and improvement with respect for institutional mission.

“CHEA recognition represents an important validation of AAQEP’s rigorous, innovation-oriented and context-driven approach to accreditation,” said Mark LaCelle-Peterson, AAQEP president and CEO. “It also affirms the vision and effort of the educator preparation professionals and state education staff who worked together to develop this next-generation model of quality assurance and improvement.”

Sylvia Read, professor and associate dean for educator preparation at Utah State University, served on one of the working groups that designed AAQEP. “Because it was founded on the collective knowledge and skills of the field, AAQEP honors the local context in which educator preparation occurs while pushing the field to rise to the challenges of today’s education landscape,” said Read, who led Utah State to become the first educator preparation provider to receive AAQEP accreditation in 2019. “Through the presentation of evidence related to the AAQEP standards, programs are able to critically reflect on their effectiveness and impact.”

AAQEP grew out of demands of preparation programs and state agencies for a national accreditor that focused on performance outcomes, continuous improvement and innovation in response to local needs. Since its founding in 2017, this supportive, peer-based system has
attracted over 150 members in 27 states and territories, and eight states have signed formal cooperation agreements with AAQEP.

The Oregon Teacher Standards and Practices Commission has one of these agreements, clarifying expectations for programs that choose to pursue AAQEP accreditation. While participation in national accreditation is generally voluntary, Oregon is one of approximately a dozen states that mandate national accreditation for some or all educator preparation programs. “We must not forget that accreditation of educator preparation programs is ultimately to ensure a quality education for our nation’s children. This imperative requires a commitment to the continuous improvement of the paradigms and practices through which educators are prepared to enter our schools,” said Anthony Rosilez, executive director of the Oregon TSPC. “AAQEP’s theory of action for accreditation accentuates this commitment within Oregon’s preparation programs and has generated discourse and positive change in education program accreditation across the country.”

“The philosophy that is foundational to AAQEP—a commitment to transparency, program quality, high academic standards, continuous improvement and innovation—is critical to me as a university president. These factors also align closely with CHEA’s standards for recognition of accrediting organizations,” said Sandra Doran, president of Bay Path University and chair of AAQEP’s Board of Directors. “The Board commends AAQEP’s professional staff and volunteer corps, whose dedication and depth of experience undergird this organization’s success.”

AAQEP is one of three accreditors for educator preparation now recognized by CHEA; the other two are the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

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*Founded in 2017, the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP) is a membership association and quality assurance agency that provides accreditation services and formative support to all types of educator preparation providers. As of spring 2021, AAQEP is working with over 150 educator preparation providers in 27 states and territories. Of those, 31 providers in 12 states and territories are now AAQEP-accredited. For more information on AAQEP, visit [https://aaqep.org/](https://aaqep.org/). For more information on CHEA, visit [https://www.chea.org/](https://www.chea.org/).*