

# AAQEP

Association for **Advancing  
Quality** in Educator Preparation

# Quality Advocate

Spring 2018

## Expanding the Conversation: The Collaborative Turn in Quality Assurance for Educator Preparation

By Mark LaCelle-Peterson

Welcome to *Quality Advocate*, the newsletter of the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP).

The field of educator preparation has been engaged for decades in a professional conversation about quality, driven by questions like these: What does quality educator preparation look like? How do we know when we've succeeded? What counts as evidence of success? What criteria should we use in making determinations about quality, and how should we recognize it? How can we best formalize and structure these decisions? These, of course, are the questions that define professional accreditation in our field—as in all professional fields.

Indeed, this line of discussion extends beyond educator preparation to the whole of accreditation in U.S. higher education, and now is an exciting time to be part of the ever-developing accreditation landscape: policy shops are generating innovative proposals, peer review is gaining renewed respect, and in our own field, new performance assessments provide increased leverage for program improvement.

AAQEP represents the most recent chapter in this long-running narrative. The idea for a new association to

advance quality in the field emerged from ongoing conversation among teacher educators who valued and enjoyed collaborating on quality assurance, program improvement, and innovation. This dialogue grew to include increasing numbers of educators and state education personnel interested in creating a new process for quality assurance—one that would balance accountability with support for improvement and innovation. A year ago, the conversation took on a formal organizational identity with the incorporation of AAQEP, an association with the goal of promoting preparation of effective professionals in programs that engage education's toughest challenges directly, in context.

AAQEP's foundation was laid by the members of three working groups—43 leaders in quality assurance from 14 states, 39 institutions, and three state education departments—who developed the new organization's expectations framework and quality assurance processes. Many others contributed feedback on the draft framework at the dozen conferences where it was presented or through the nationwide

survey.

Since the standards were finalized and posted, the conversation has only grown broader. In national and state-focused webinars, among the 100+ attendees at the first Annual Meeting and Quality Assurance Symposium, and in informational and planning workshops from Guam to Hawaii to

Long Island, the dialogue about how to use the standards to document and strengthen program quality is ongoing. The AAQEP process also incorporates features designed

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**AAQEP's foundation was laid by three working groups whose members tackled the fundamental challenges of accreditation: standards, rules of evidence, process design, and consistency.**

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to foster collaboration among providers and to support and highlight program improvement and innovation.

Already, four providers are planning for accreditation reviews in early 2019. In preparation for those visits, AAQEP is engaging the initial cohort of reviewers and commissioners in professional learning.

This newsletter and the AAQEP website provide many avenues for you, too, to join the conversation. We look forward to collaborating with you! ●

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*Mark LaCelle-Peterson is president and CEO of AAQEP.*

# N.Y. Board of Regents Approves New Accreditation Option for Educator Preparation

The New York State Board of Regents approved a regulatory change May 8 that expands the options in national accreditation for the state’s educator preparation providers. The change allows institutions currently accredited by another national agency to apply for accreditation by AAQEP and still meet the state’s “continuous accreditation” requirement.

“Institutions across the state and across the three sectors—SUNY, CUNY, and independent—have expressed enthusiasm for the availability of options and for a more collaborative and innovative accreditation model,” said Mark LaCelle-Peterson, AAQEP president and CEO. “This rule change resulted from collaborative advocacy by many institutions, and we are excited to begin working with them.”

Deputy Commissioner of Higher Education John D’Agati announced the change to institutions in a memorandum to the state’s education deans May 9, explaining that providers must notify the state education department of their intent to shift to AAQEP before their current accreditation expires and then have up to 5 years to successfully complete AAQEP accreditation. To assist institutions in transitioning to the new system, AAQEP will be running accreditation planning workshops on campuses across New York State in the coming months.

New York is the second state to accept AAQEP as an accreditation option for educator preparation programs; Hawaii was the first. The first site visits are scheduled to begin in February or March of 2019. ●

## AAQEP Design & Implementation Milestones

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- 2017**
    - May 2017: Incorporation application filed
    - July 14, 2017: Bylaws adopted by incorporating board
    - August–September 2017: Working Groups meet
    - Hawaii Teaching Standards Board accepts AAQEP as an accreditation option
    - Draft framework presented at conferences in 12 states
  - 2018**
    - Draft posted on [www.aaqep.org](http://www.aaqep.org) with survey response form
    - Comments and feedback reviewed by Working Groups
    - January 2018: Final framework posted
    - February 28, 2018: First Annual Meeting, Baltimore, MD
    - May 2018: New York State Board of Regents opens accreditation options in New York
  - 2019**
    - Members begin developing self-studies
    - February–March 2019: First site visits

## CALENDAR

**Quality assurance and improvement support is coming to New York!** AAQEP is pleased to announce a series of transition workshops in the state of New York. These workshops will focus on AAQEP standards, process, and evidence requirements. Leave with action steps to implement quality assurance for your programs!

The following dates and locations are available:

- **May 17** – Hofstra University, Long Island Region
- **May 30** – Clarkson University Capitol Region Campus, Capitol Region
- **June 8** – LeMoyne College, Syracuse Region
- **June 15** – Bank Street College of Education, New York City Region
- **June 20** – Daemen College, Buffalo Region
- **TBD** – Nazareth College, Rochester Region
- **TBD** – Manhattan College, Lower Hudson Region

Go to  
**aaqep.org**  
for details and  
registration

**Want to host a workshop for your campus or region? Contact us at [aaqep@aaqep.org](mailto:aaqep@aaqep.org)**

## Learn About AAQEP – On Campus or Online



Participants in a May workshop in Utah discuss the AAQEP framework and how it aligns with their internal quality assurance systems.

By Linda McKee

**D**id you know AAQEP offers multiple opportunities for you to learn about the newest accreditation option in educator preparation and how it could benefit your programs? Sign up now or contact us to explore the following events and activities:

### Information Sessions

What is AAQEP, and how does its quality assurance framework support excellence and improvement? We're happy to bring a brief informational session on the AAQEP framework to your campus or regional meeting.

### Interactive Workshops

We also offer workshops to help institutions transition to the AAQEP system from another accreditor. In these interactive workshops, attendees review the AAQEP framework, cross-walk their existing data systems with the AAQEP standards, and plan their steps to AAQEP accreditation.

This spring, we are partnering with colleges and universities across New York to offer numerous transition planning workshops following their state's approval of AAQEP as an option for educator preparation accreditation (see p. 2). Register [here](#) to learn how the AAQEP standards align with your evidence at one of the New York

workshops.

To arrange a transitional workshop for your own region, contact us at [aaqep@aaqep.org](mailto:aaqep@aaqep.org).

### Webinars

AAQEP frequently presents information and updates through free webinars. Our next webinar, hosted by NASDTEC, will be focused on state education authorities' collaboration with AAQEP.

Please join us **Friday, May 18, at 1:00 p.m. Eastern time** to learn more about AAQEP and how we are collaborating with the states in the free webinar "Multiple Pathways to National Accreditation: The Essential Considerations." The webinar is free, but registration is required. [Click here to register.](#)

### EPP-Specific Consulting

AAQEP offers customized assistance to individual educator preparation providers on the alignment of evidence, data audits, coordination of action planning and timelines, and the AAQEP process. Contact us at [aaqep@aaqep.org](mailto:aaqep@aaqep.org) for costs and potential times.

We look forward to working with you! ●

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*Linda McKee is chief learning officer at AAQEP.*

 NASDTEC

**AAQEP**

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The National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) invites you to a free webinar with AAQEP:

## Multiple Pathways to National Accreditation: The Essential Considerations

**Friday, May 18**  
**1:00 p.m. EDT**

Learn about the newest option in educator preparation accreditation and how AAQEP is collaborating with state education agencies.

**Register at <http://bit.ly/aaqep518>**

The webinar is free, but registration is required.

# Reflection on AAQEP First Annual Meeting and Symposium

By Jessica Miranda

The first Annual Meeting and Quality Assurance Symposium for AAQEP brought members of the field of educator preparation to Baltimore, Maryland, from across the country to learn more about AAQEP's approach to accreditation. Throughout the February 28 event, attendees engaged in rich discussions about quality educa-



tor preparation and how innovation within our field can be supported and encouraged through the accreditation process.

There was a sense of excitement and optimism as attendees learned about AAQEP's framework that focuses on supporting program improvement within the diverse contexts in which we work and aims to move the process of accreditation towards being improvement focused rather than compliance driven.

Mark LaCelle-Peterson and Linda McKee provided a clear and thoughtful introduction to AAQEP's mission, vision, and framework for accreditation. The agenda for the day included sessions that covered the principles that guided the development of AAQEP's system, the standards and their categorization as fundamental expectations and contextual challenges/institutional context, and the process for accreditation.

Attendees also had opportunities to learn about and discuss AAQEP's process innovations including cohort grouping for increased collaboration and support across preparation providers, a strengths-based model for increased efficiency and reduced burden, and an option for staggered submissions of evidence by standard.

As a member of the Expectations Working Group, I was eager to learn from new colleagues about their programs and hear their feedback

on AAQEP's standards and process. The common thread throughout our conversations was appreciation for a fresh approach to accreditation: an approach that is improvement focused, innovation friendly, and flexible. AAQEP recognizes that preparation programs' diverse institutional con-

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texts and contextual challenges require a quality assurance process that is not "one size fits all." Through the collaborative peer-review framework, educator preparation programs can focus on strengthening their program practices and the P-20 education system.

The meeting concluded with an invitation to us all to be involved in the continued development of AAQEP. As our field continues in our commitment to student success and quality educator preparation, AAQEP is a promising new option for continuous improvement and national accreditation. For many in educator preparation, AAQEP offers a renewed sense of hope that we can participate in a self-study process that strengthens our programs, allows us to test innovations within our quality assurance system, and encourages dialogue about an accreditation process that our faculty will want to be a part of. ●

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*Jessica Miranda is director of assessment, accreditation, and accountability for the University of Hawaii at Manoa College of Education.*

Download the presentation slides from our Baltimore symposium and other recent events at [www.aaqep.org/presentations.html](http://www.aaqep.org/presentations.html)

## AAQEP Standards & Evidence Requirements in Brief

**Standard 1: Completer Performance** – Program completers perform as professional educators with the capacity to support success for all learners.

**Standard 2: Completer Professional Competence and Growth** – Program completers adapt to working in a variety of contexts and grow as professionals.

**Standard 3: Quality Program Practices** – The program has the capacity to ensure that its completers meet Standards 1 and 2.

**Standard 4: Program Engagement in System Improvement** – Program practices strengthen the P-20 education system in light of local needs and in keeping with the program’s mission.

The evidence put forward by preparation providers in making their case for AAQEP accreditation will include:

- Multiple measures with reasonable continuity of instruments
- Direct evidence of performance in the role for which candidates are being prepared
- Completer, employer, and other “downstream measures” to supplement direct measures of candidate performance
- Evidence of the reliability, validity, fairness, and trustworthiness of all measures as appropriate to the type of data, which may include qualitative and quantitative data

**For details, download the [AAQEP Expectations Framework](#).**

## The AAQEP Framework: A Review

By Nancy F. Barrett

Accreditation has the potential to be a powerful, positive tool for education preparation programs. In addition to providing a “seal of approval” to potential students, parents, and external stakeholders, programs can use evidence gathered during the accreditation process to improve existing programs, identify potential new initiatives, as well as document outcome attainment. However, very often the accreditation process can be unwieldy and burdensome because of the seemingly endless set of requirements.

AAQEP’s proposed accreditation process seeks to avoid this pitfall by simplifying and streamlining the requirements. In its [Expectations Framework](#) document, AAQEP articulates four standards that clearly outline the elements important for quality educator preparation programs. Two address candidate and completer preparation, and the other two address program requirements.

To document achieving AAQEP’s accreditation standards, programs will be able to define the measurement tools they will use. Collection methods would need to be robust using multiple direct and indirect measures to document candidate/completer teaching skills and dispositions as well as content and pedagogical knowledge. Whatever instruments or methods are used for data collection, programs need to document their validity and reliability. All of the guidelines set out by AAQEP are straightforward and reflect best practice in the field of program evaluation and student assessment.

Besides allowing programs the ability to determine their own measures to document outcome attainment, AAQEP indicates that there is the option of presenting evidence on one standard at a time during the accreditation cycle. This option has the advantage of giving faculty the time needed to address each standard in a systematic and thoughtful manner resulting in a better preparation pro-

gram in the long run.

While AAQEP’s proposed accreditation system seems to allow programs a great deal of flexibility, the Data Audit Planning Framework seems to provide programs with guidance in selecting appropriate evidence. As with the standards themselves, their suggestions identify program-based artifacts that most teacher preparation programs probably already collect to ensure program quality.

All in all, AAQEP’s proposed accreditation process seems to provide the structure for a streamlined, evidence-based assessment of teacher education programs. If it delivers on that promise, educator preparation providers can use this framework to systematically and thoughtfully review their training programs, resulting in programs that strive always for excellence. ●

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*Nancy F. Barrett is the coordinator of assessment and accreditation at the University of Illinois Springfield College of Education and Human Services.*

## Meet the Board: Sandra Doran

*Sandra Doran is chair of the AAQEP Board of Directors.*

**Q** What is your current professional role, and how does it relate particularly to quality assurance or accreditation?

**A** I am interim president of Salem Academy and College, located in Winston-Salem, NC.

One of my roles, together with our outstanding faculty, is to ensure the highest quality program offering to every student. We offer a robust student learning experience that is regularly examined for continuous improvement to ensure quality, in all programs, including our education programs.

**Q** How have you engaged with accreditation work in the past?



**A** In prior leadership roles, as president of American College of Education and as chief of staff and general counsel of Lesley University, national specialized program accreditation was essential to our program. It is an indicator of quality for both the institutions and our students.

**Q** Why did you decide to get involved in this new accreditation endeavor?

**A** AAQEP's mission as a progressive, field-centered accreditor, and its approach to continuous improvement and quality assurance, are particularly relevant to our students and educators. We need greater responsiveness to today's challenges, and I believe that AAQEP is the solution. ●

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newsletter at  
[aaqep.org/update](http://aaqep.org/update)

## Join AAQEP Today!

We currently offer two categories of institutional membership:

**Affiliate Members** receive regular updates from AAQEP, discounted member rates on meeting and workshop registration, and access to the formative peer-review process. Affiliate Members can apply for Regular Membership at any time, and their annual Affiliate fee will be applied to the Regular Member fee.

**Regular Members** are preparation providers that are accredited by or seeking accreditation from AAQEP. Regular Members enjoy all the benefits of affiliation (regular updates, discounted registration, and formative peer reviews); in addition, members work with staff to plan and implement a self-study and host a site visit. The annual fee for Regular Membership is based on the number of program completers.

Apply online at [aaqep.org/membership](http://aaqep.org/membership)