EDUCATION AND LABOR CABINET
Education Professional Standards Board
(New Administrative Regulation)

16 KAR 5:015. Standards for approval of educator preparation programs.

RELATES TO: KRS 161.020, 161.028, 161.030, 161.042
STATUTORY AUTHORITY: KRS 161.028, 161.030, 161.042
CERTIFICATION STATEMENT:
NECESSITY, FUNCTION, AND CONFORMITY: This administrative regulation establishes the standards for approval of a program offered by an Educator Preparation Provider (EPP). This administrative regulation complies with KRS 161.028(1)(b), which requires the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) to set standards for EPPs, and with KRS 161.030(1), which vests the EPSB with authority over the certification of all teachers and other school personnel and requires the issuance of all certificates under KRS 161.010 to 161.126 be done in accordance with the EPSB's administrative regulations.

Section 1. Definitions.
(1) "Educator Preparation Provider" or "EPP" means the accredited provider at an Institution responsible for the preparation of educators.
(2) "Institution" means a college or university.
(3) "Institutional Accreditation" means the accreditation that is granted to an entire Institution. This may be earned through a regional accreditor or national accreditor that is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.
(4) "Prospective Provider" means the Institution that is seeking a first-time EPSB accreditation.
(5) "Technical Visit" means an on-campus, in-person visit by staff of the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) to an Institution or EPP to advise for program and accreditation reviews.

Section 2. Program Review Committee.
(1) The EPSB shall appoint Program Review Committee members as follows:
(a) Two (2) EPP representatives, one (1) from a public college or university and one (1) from an independent college or university;
(b) Two (2) EPP at-large representatives; and
(c) One (1) public school district employee.
(2) An appointment to the Program Review Committee shall be for a period of two (2) years.
(3) The chair of the EPSB shall designate a member of the Program Review Committee to serve as the chair of the Program Review Committee.
(4) Staff of the KDE shall provide training to all Program Review Committee members.
(5) The Program Review Committee shall assist with the processes outlined in Section 4 related to new EPPs, in Section 5 related to new program approvals for existing EPPs, in Section 6 for continuing program approvals, in Section 7 with revocation of EPPs for cause, and with other processes as designated by the EPSB.

Section 3. Content Reviewers.
(1) The KDE staff shall identify and train content reviewers in how to evaluate each of the programs with a certificate area to provide content area expertise to the KDE staff and the Program Review Committee.
(2)
(a) A content reviewer shall review all new educator preparation program proposals to establish congruence of the program with at least the following:

1. The minimum standards set forth in KRS 161.028(1)(b);
2. Applicable state-approved standards, such as those established in Titles 16 and 704 of the Kentucky Administrative Regulations; and
3. To the extent applicable, KRS 164.306(2).

(b) Staff of the KDE may initiate a content review for a continued program review as determined by program changes that may have occurred since the last review.

(3) A content reviewer shall submit appropriate documentation to the KDE staff and the Program Review Committee for use in the program review process.

(4) A content reviewer shall not make any determination or decision regarding the approval or denial of a program.

Section 4. Developmental Process for New Educator Preparation Institutions.

(1) Institutions requesting approval from the EPSB to be recognized as a new EPP shall follow the four (4) stage developmental process established in this Section for Prospective Providers to gain temporary authority to admit and exit candidates and operate one (1) or more educator preparation programs.

(2) Stage One: Application.

(a) The Prospective Provider shall submit to the EPSB for review an official notice of intent from the chief executive officer and the governing board of the Institution indicating the Institution's intent to begin the developmental process to become an EPP;

(b) The KDE staff shall hold an in-person or virtual meeting with the Prospective Provider;

(c) The Prospective Provider shall submit the following documentation:

1. A letter from the Institution's chief executive officer that designates the Prospective Provider as having primary authority and responsibility for professional education programs;

2. A chart or narrative that lists all educator preparation programs to be offered by the Institution, including any nontraditional and alternative programs, and shall depict:

a. The degree or award levels for each program;

b. The administrative location for each program; and

c. The structure or structures through which the Prospective Provider implements its oversight of all programs;

3. An organizational chart of the Institution that depicts the Prospective Provider and indicates the Prospective Provider's relationship to other administrative units within the Institution;

4. The name and job description of the head of the Prospective Provider and an assurance that the head has the authority and responsibility for the overall administration and operation of the Prospective Provider;

5. The Prospective Provider shall create a complete program profile to include: the organizational mission; content and unique characteristics; organization structure description; vision, mission, and goals; and, shared values and beliefs;

6. The policies and procedures that guide the operations of the Prospective Provider. Required documentation shall include the cover page and table of contents for codified policies, bylaws, procedures, and student handbooks;

7. The Prospective Provider's processes, including a description of Candidate Admission and Progression; Standards Alignment and Coursework; Professional Capabilities; Clinical Partnerships and Practice; Program Assessments; and, Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement; and

8. The Institutional Accreditation. Required documentation shall include a copy of the current Institutional Accreditation letter or report that indicates Institutional

Accreditation status; and

(d) Stage One documentation shall be reviewed by the KDE staff and the Program Review Committee. The Program Review Committee shall determine adequacy, timeliness, and conformity with the with the corresponding standards as set forth in Section 3(2)(a) of this administrative regulation and, thereafter, shall make one (1) of the following recommendations:

1. Concerns identified and reported to the Prospective Provider for resolution; or
2. Recommendation to proceed to Stage Two.

(3) Stage Two: On-Site Visit and Program Review Committee Recommendation.

(a) A team of three (3) trained reviewers shall make a one (1) day visit to the Institution to verify the evidence submitted as part of Stage One, which is outlined in subsection (2) of this Section;

(b) The team of three (3) shall be identified by the KDE staff and comprised of the following:

1. One (1) representative from a public college or university;
2. One (1) representative from an independent college or university; and
3. One (1) representative from a public school district;

(c) The team shall submit a written report of its findings to the KDE staff;

(d) The KDE staff shall provide a copy of the written report to the Institution;

(e) Within thirty (30) days of the written report being provided to the Institution, the Institution may submit a written response to the report. Therein, the Institution may:

1. Respond to the written report, including whether the Institution does or does not agree with any portion thereof; and
2. Provide supplemental materials pertinent to the written report; however, the Institution may not include any materials that were not available to the team or that were created after the team's written report was finalized; and

(f) The Program Review Committee shall review the materials gathered during Stages One and Two as well as any response from the Institution and make one (1) of the following recommendations to the EPSB with regards to temporary authorization:

1. Approval of temporary authorization for a period of two (2) years;
2. Approval with conditions of temporary authorization for a period of two (2) years; or
3. Denial of temporary authorization.

(4) Stage Three: EPSB Ruling.

(a) The EPSB shall review the materials and recommendations from the Program Review Committee and issue either:

1. Approval of temporary authorization for a period of two (2) years;
2. Approval with conditions of temporary authorization for a period of two (2) years; or
3. Denial of temporary authorization.

(b) An Institution denied temporary authorization may reapply no sooner than one (1) year after the EPSB's decision;

(c) An Institution receiving an approval or an approval with conditions shall:

1. Hold this temporary authorization for two (2) years; and
2. Continue the developmental process by pursuing national accreditation as established in 16 KAR 5:010;

(d) During the two (2) year period of temporary authorization, the Institution shall:

1. Admit and exit candidates;
2. Monitor, evaluate, and assess the academic and professional competency of candidates;
3. Provide reports to the KDE staff on the Institution's progress as requested; and
4. Complete an annual report compliant with 16 KAR 5:010; and

(e) During the two (2) year period of temporary authorization, the KDE staff:
1. May schedule additional Technical Visits; and
2. Shall monitor progress by review of annual reports and admission and exit data.

(5) Stage Four: Initial Accreditation Visit. This shall be conducted in accordance with 16 KAR 5:010.

Section 5. New Program Approval for an Accredited EPP.

(1) An accredited EPP shall submit a new program proposal for each educator preparation program and route leading to certification or rank change.

(2) A program proposal shall demonstrate the following components:

(a) Program inventory details;

(b) Verification of the EPP profile and program overview;

(c) A description of its clinical partnerships relevant to the new program or route, if needed;

(d) A description of the EPP's quality assurance and continuous improvement plan as it pertains to the new program or route;

(e) An alignment of the program's coursework and field and clinical experiences with the corresponding standards as set forth in Section 3(2)(a) of this administrative regulation.

(f) Identification and alignment of the program assessments to the state performance standards to assure each candidate's mastery prior to exit from the program;

(g) Identification of how the program addresses the applicable regulatory requirements of Title 16 of the Kentucky Administrative Regulations;

(h) A curriculum guide provided to each candidate that includes the following:
1. Name of the program and resulting certification and rank;
2. Program admission criteria;
3. Program coursework;
4. Program exit requirements; and
5. Certification requirements if they differ from the program exit requirements.

(3) The Program Review Committee shall review the program proposal and make one (1) of the following recommendations to the EPSB regarding the EPP's new program proposal:

(a) Approval with the next review scheduled during the regular accreditation cycle;

(b) Approval with conditions; or

(c) Denial.

(4) The EPSB shall review the materials and recommendations from the Program Review Committee and issue either:

(a) Approval with the next review scheduled during the regular accreditation cycle;

(b) Approval with conditions; or

(c) Denial.

(5) A program shall receive EPSB approval, either with or without conditions, prior to admission of any student to the program.

Section 6. Continuing Program Approval.

(1) An EPP that has been granted approval for each of its educator preparation programs, shall complete a continued program review to ensure compliance with state statutes and administrative regulations. This review shall be completed in four (4) stages:

(a) Stage One consists of a written narrative of program changes, data collection, analysis of data, and innovations for each of the following six (6) domains supported by evidence:
1. Candidate Admission and Progression;
2. Standards Alignment and Coursework;
3. Professional Capabilities;

4. Clinical Partnerships and Practice;
5. Program Assessments; and
6. Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement;

(b) During Stage Two, the EPP shall select a peer Institution from a list approved by the EPSB to act as reviewers for the EPP's continued program, including reviewing documentation necessary to demonstrate compliance. Following review and in light of feedback received from the peer Institution, the KDE staff shall complete a preliminary report providing the Institution with a rating for each domain of either:

1. Met, or
2. Unmet;

(c) Stage Three consists of the EPP making a presentation to the KDE staff and a peer Institution with a focus on reviewing the EPP's programs and addressing any unmet domains identified during the previous two (2) phases. During this presentation, staff of the KDE shall collect any additional information needed from the EPP to ensure all domains have been met; and

(d) Stage Four consists of the Program Review Committee reviewing materials collected in the initial three (3) stages and making one (1) of the following recommendations to the EPSB:

1. Continued approval of one or more individual program(s);
2. Continued approval with conditions of one or more individual program(s); or
3. Denial of one or more individual program(s).

(2)

(a) The recommendation from the Program Review Committee shall be presented to the EPSB at the next regularly scheduled meeting; and

(b) The EPSB shall consider the findings and recommendations of the Program Review Committee and shall and issue either:

1. Continued approval of one or more individual program(s);
2. Continued approval with conditions on one or more individual program(s); or
3. Denial of one or more individual program(s).

(3) The EPSB may order a review of one or more individual program(s) of an EPP at any time in the event the EPSB believes any of the following conditions may exist:

(a) Weak Clinical Experience: Candidates not being provided consistent, high-quality opportunities to work in classrooms with expert teachers to build relationships and learn to manage classroom dynamics;

(b) Ineffective Content Preparation: Programs failing to adequately prepare teachers to teach the appropriate standards or for supporting students in the learning process;

(c) Failure to Use Evidence-Based Pedagogies: Preparation that is not aligned with proven research on how children learn, or that fails to train teachers in explicit reading instruction;

(d) Lack of Support/Feedback: Candidates not receiving adequate, constructive feedback during their clinical experiences, leaving them unprepared for the realities of the classroom;

(e) Poorly Structured Curriculum: Programs that overemphasize theory at the expense of practical application and evidence-based practice;

(f) Low Accountability for Candidate Preparedness: Programs passing candidates who fail to demonstrate mastery of essential skills; or

(g) Any other circumstance that the EPSB believes indicates that one or more individual program(s) of an EPP is in serious jeopardy, as determined by the EPSB.

(4) The review contemplated in subsection (3) of this Section shall include the following:

(a) A written report about the identified program(s) and the continuous improvement plans; and

(b) After review of the written report set forth in subsection (4), paragraph (a) of this Section, an on-site visit may be conducted by the KDE staff and a team of trained reviewers selected by the KDE.

(5) Within fifteen (15) days of any on-site visit conducted or, if an on-site visit is not conducted, within thirty (30) days of the issuance of the written report set forth in subsection (4), paragraph (a) of this Section, the review team shall complete and submit to the EPP a final written report.

(6) Within thirty (30) days of receipt of the final written report set forth in subsection (5) of this Section, the EPP may respond in writing and, if needed, provide additional evidence. For these purposes, additional evidence shall include the intentional use of documentation, valid multiple measures, and analysis to support and prove an EPP's claims regarding adherence to program approval standards.

(7) The Program Review Committee shall consider the final report of the review team and the EPP response, if any, and make one (1) of the following recommendations to the EPSB:

(a) Continued approval of one or more individual program(s);

(b) Continued approval with conditions on one or more individual program(s); or

(c) Denial of one or more individual program(s).

(8) The EPSB shall consider the findings and recommendations of the Program Review Committee and shall issue either:

(a) Continued approval of one or more individual program(s);

(b) Continued approval with conditions on one or more individual program(s); or

(c) Denial of one or more individual program(s).

(9) If the EPSB denies one or more program(s) under subsection (2)(b)3. or subsection (8)(c) of this Section, the EPP shall notify each candidate currently admitted to the impacted program(s) of the EPSB action. The notice shall include the following information:

(a) A currently admitted candidate shall receive the certification or advancement in rank sought so long as:

1. The candidate is recommended for certification or advancement in rank within one (1) year of the date of the program denial decision; and

2. The candidate submits a completed application, including payment of any applicable fees, for certification or advancement in rank to the EPSB within one (1) year and ninety (90) days from the date of the program denial decision; or

(b) A candidate who does not meet the criteria established in paragraph (a) of this subsection shall transfer to an EPSB approved program receive the certificate or advancement in rank.

Section 7. Revocation of an Educator Preparation Provider for Cause.

(1) If an area of concern or an allegation of misconduct arises at any time concerning an EPP, the KDE staff shall bring a complaint to the EPSB for initial review.

(2) After reviewing the allegations in the complaint, the EPSB may refer the matter to the Program Review Committee for further investigation.

(3)

(a) Notice of the EPSB's decision to refer the matter and the complaint shall be sent to the EPP; and

(b) Within thirty (30) days of receipt of the complaint, the EPP may respond to the allegations in writing and provide evidence pertaining to the allegations in the complaint to the EPSB. For these purposes, evidence shall include the intentional use of documentation, valid multiple measures, and analysis to support and prove an EPP's claims regarding adherence to program approval standards.

(4)

(a) The Program Review Committee shall review any evidence supporting the allegations and any information provided by the EPP; and

(b) Within thirty (30) days of the EPP's written response or, if no response from the EPP is submitted, within sixty (60) days of the EPSB's decision to refer the matter to the Program Review Committee for further investigation, the Program Review Committee shall issue a report containing one (1) of the following recommendations to the EPSB:

1. Continued approval of the EPP and its programs;
2. Continued approval with conditions of the EPP and its programs; or
3. Revocation of the EPP and its programs.

(5)

(a) The recommendation from the Program Review Committee shall be presented to the EPSB at the next regularly scheduled meeting; and

(b) The EPSB shall consider the findings and recommendations of the Program Review Committee and issue either:

1. Continued approval of the EPP and its programs;
2. Continued approval with conditions of the EPP and its programs; or
3. Revocation of the EPP and its programs.

Section 8. Public Disclosure.

(1) The EPSB shall prepare a written notice of the final program approval decisions set forth in Section 4, paragraph (4)(a); Section (5), paragraph (4); Section 6, paragraph (8); and, Section 7, paragraph (5)(b) of this regulation. The written notice shall include the essential information to the Institution, including the decision on program approval and dates of official action of the EPSB.

(2) The public disclosure shall be entered into the minutes of the EPSB for the meeting in which the official action was taken by the EPSB.

(3) The EPP is required to disclose on its website and to all students admitted to its EPSB-approved programs its current program approval and accreditation status. The EPP has ten (10) days from the date of the EPSB's final determination to update any changes on its website and to its students.

Section 9. Appeals Process.

(1) Within thirty (30) days of the EPSB's decision made pursuant to Section 4, paragraph (4)(a); Section (5), paragraph (4); Section 6, paragraph (8); or, Section 7, paragraph (5)(b), the Institution may appeal that decision on the grounds that:

(a) A state procedure was not followed; or

(b) Evidence of compliance in place at the time of the review and favorable to the Institution was not appropriately considered; however, the Institution may not include any materials that were not available to EPSB or that were created after the EPSB's decision was finalized.

(2) An ad hoc appeals committee of no fewer than three (3) members shall be appointed by the EPSB chair and shall include: One (1) representative from a public college or university; One (1) representative from an independent college or university; and, One (1) representative from a public school district. No member of the ad hoc appeals committee shall have been involved with the EPSB's decision or have a known conflict of interest regarding the Institution.

(3) The ad hoc committee shall have access to the full administrative file considered by the EPSB as well as any appeals records submitted by the Institution and shall issue one (1) of the following recommendations to the EPSB:

(a) Uphold the decision of the EPSB;

(b) Modify the decision of the EPSB; or

(c) Overturn the decision of the EPSB.

(4) The consideration of the appeal shall be in accordance with KRS Chapter 13B.

L. AMBER SNELL, Board Chair

APPROVED BY AGENCY: October 28, 2026
FILED WITH LRC: October 30, 2026 at 3:55 p.m.
PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMENT PERIOD: A public hearing on this administrative regulation shall be held on January 25, 2027, at 10 a.m. ET, in the State Board Room, Fifth Floor, 300 Sower Boulevard, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601. Individuals interested in being heard at this hearing shall notify this agency in writing by five (5) workdays prior to the hearing, of their intent to attend. If no notification of intent to attend the hearing was received by that date, the hearing may be cancelled. A transcript of the public hearing will not be made unless a written request for a transcript is made. If you do not wish to be heard at the public hearing, you may submit written comments on the proposed administrative regulation. Written comments shall be accepted through January 31, 2027. Send written notification of intent to be heard at the public hearing or written comments on the proposed administrative regulation to the contact person.
CONTACT PERSON: Todd G. Allen, General Counsel, Kentucky Department of Education, 300 Sower Boulevard, 5th Floor, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601, phone 502-564-4474, fax 502-564-9321, email regcomments@education.ky.gov.