

# NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT— AAQEP COOPERATION AGREEMENT

between the  
New York State Education Department  
and the  
Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation

This agreement establishes a framework for cooperation between the New York State Education Department (NYSED) 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 New York. The purpose of this agreement is to support quality assurance, continuous improvement, and innovation in educator preparation by institutions of higher education authorized to award degrees by the New York State Board of Regents as they seek and maintain national accreditation through AAQEP.

AAQEP affirms NYSED's efforts to ensure quality preparation of educators to meet the needs of New York State's children, families, schools, and communities and commits to ensuring quality educator preparation by providers approved by NYSED. By entering this agreement, NYSED 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. AAQEP is a national accreditor recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

## **1. Standards Used in Quality Assurance Reviews in New York State**

Quality Assurance Reviews conducted by AAQEP in New York State will be guided by the current version of the AAQEP standards (available at <https://aaqep.org/>) and in keeping with AAQEP policy regarding the application of those standards. In conducting reviews of programs approved by NYSED, AAQEP will require that all relevant New York State Commissioner's Regulations 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 New York State**

The scope of AAQEP accreditation sought by providers in New York State must include all programs leading to educator certification that are registered by the NYSED, as listed on the Inventory of Registered Programs, and require continuous accreditation as specified in Chapter II of Subchapter A, Part 52.21(c) Accreditation.

Educator preparation programs that are accredited by specialized accrediting organizations recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation are not required to be reviewed by AAQEP. However, if an EPP chooses to have these programs included within AAQEP accreditation, they must be submitted for review by AAQEP.

Transitional B, Transitional C, and Transitional D programs registered in partnership with alternative program providers (e.g., New York City Teaching Fellows (NYCTF), Teach for America (TFA)), and that have no enrollments may continue if the Institution provides evidence of the provider's continued interest in the program. If candidates were enrolled

in these programs at any point since the last Quality Assurance Review visit, they must be reviewed.

In addition to programs specified above which must be included in the Quality Assurance Review, the provider may, at its discretion, choose to include additional programs of study leading to a degree designed for those intending to work as, or already working as, educational professionals. For such programs of study, where continuous accreditation is not required and/or no state standards are specified, the provider shall identify any standards in addition to the AAQEP standards to which its program(s) are 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 <https://aaqep.org>. AAQEP's process includes an optional proposal review stage two to three years prior to a schedule site visit. All Quality Assurance Reviews include an off-site review two months prior to each site visit, conducted virtually, which NYSED staff are welcome to attend, and an on-site visit, the scope of which is determined by program size and complexity.

NYSED will appoint a staff member from the Office of College and University Evaluation (OCUE) to serve as a liaison in the Site Review, who will typically be the OCUE liaison assigned to the EPP for program registration purposes. The OCUE liaison will provide to the lead AAQEP Review Team member state-specific requirements for EPPs and other relevant State information prior to the Site Review, including the Inventory of Registered Programs listing for the EPP.

### **4. Quality Assurance Review Team Composition**

AAQEP will appoint a sufficient number of Quality Assurance Review Team members to each review case, as stated in AAQEP's *Guide to AAQEP Accreditation*, to ensure that the review is carried out thoroughly and efficiently. Each AAQEP review team will include at least one educational practitioner from New York State nominated by the EPP 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.

### **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 NYSED staff at no cost (though AAQEP will not cover travel expenses); NYSED observers need not have participated in the training as a condition for joining review teams as observers.

### **6. Relation of Accreditation to Program Approval**

NYSED has sole responsibility for initial and continuing program registration consistent with NYS Education Law and Commissioner's Regulations in granting program approval and registration. NYSED may utilize information generated from AAQEP's Quality Assurance Review, including but not limited to AAQEP's decision on accreditation and the assignment of any areas of concern.

The following New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR), Title 8 Chapter II will be applied by NYSED only for purposes of determining state approval and registration. These regulations include those that provide direct guidance for the registration of

teacher education, educational leadership, and school counselor programs in New York State; and

1. Chapter II (Regulations of the Commissioner of Education), Subchapter A (Higher and Professional Education), Part 52 (Registration of curricula), Section 52.21 (Registration of curricula in teacher education);
2. Chapter II, Subchapter A, Part 52, Sections 50.1 (Definitions), 52.1 and 52.2 (Registration of curricula);
3. Chapter II, Subchapter A, Part 53 (Information to be Provided);
4. Chapter II, Subchapter C (Teachers), Part 80 (Requirements for teaching certificates); and
5. Chapter II, Subchapter I (Scholarships and Grants), Part 145 (Higher Education Student Financial Aid Programs), Section 145-2 (Educational Requirements for Awards and Loans).

## **7. Accreditation Decisions**

Accreditation decisions are made by the AAQEP Accreditation Commission.

Accreditation statuses and terms are detailed in AAQEP's Guide and policy documents, available at <https://aaqep.org>. Full accreditation is for a term of 7 years. Observers from NYSED are welcome to attend accreditation meetings of the Accreditation Commission at which cases of institutions are considered (meetings are typically conducted via video conference). Accreditation decisions, including the reports on which decisions are based and Commission's rationale for each decision, will be shared with the New York State Commissioner of Education, Deputy Commissioner for Higher Education, and Director of the Office of College and University Evaluation.

In the event of a decision to deny or revoke accreditation, AAQEP's written notice will provide the reasons for the adverse action. Such notice will be provided no later than thirty (30) days following a decision to award initial accreditation or to renew or continue accreditation. In the event of a decision to place an institution on probation or to deny or terminate accreditation of an institution, notice will be provided to NYSED at the same time notice of the decision is given to the Institution, but no later than 30 days after the decision is reached. Within 30 days of receiving notification from an Institution that the Institution decided to withdraw voluntarily from accreditation or to let its accreditation lapse, AAQEP will provide NYSED with written notice.

## **8. Communication and Logistics of Collaboration**

Providers seeking AAQEP accreditation will ensure that the NYSED liaison 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 NYSED at the same time they provide it to AAQEP. AAQEP will communicate scheduled times of its off-site and on-site reviews with the NYSED liaison as specified in the agreement. AAQEP will also apprise the NYSED liaison of the schedule of Accreditation Commission meetings at which cases from New York State providers will be considered. In addition, AAQEP will provide the NYSED liaison with copies of all reports or official letters for New York State providers generated by the review team and by the Accreditation Commission.

## **9. Membership**

AAQEP views cooperation among accreditors, educator preparation providers, and state education agencies as essential to effective quality assurance. It enters into this

agreement with the intent of supporting both NYSED and providers authorized by it in ensuring the preparation of excellent and effective teachers and other professional educators. NYSED 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 New York State at reasonable cost. NYSED staff may participate in any AAQEP activities offered within New York State at no cost (AAQEP cannot cover travel expenses, meals, or lodging). AAQEP will also provide one NYSED staff member with a no-cost registration to its annual Quality Assurance Symposium and provide any additional NYSED staff registration at the reduced member rate. In addition, NYSED staff may participate in AAQEP professional learning events, including reviewer training, at no cost (e.g., travel except as above).

## Signatures

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark LaCelle-Peterson, President and CEO  
Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

By signing this agreement, the undersigned agrees to be bound by the terms outlined above and affirms that he or she has the authority to enter into this agreement on behalf of the State from date of the last signature through June 30, 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Aaron M. Baldwin  
Deputy Counsel and Authorized Signatory  
New York State Education Department

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

ADDENDUM

NYSED-AAQEP COOPERATION AGREEMENT

This Addendum supplements and clarifies Sections 3 and 7 of the Cooperation Agreement currently in effect (dated 10/13/2021) between the New York State Education Department (NYSED) and the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP). These changes make available the additional accreditation status of Initial Accreditation to educator preparation providers in the State of New York. All changes are effective from the date of the latest signature below.

**Section 3: Quality Assurance Review Process** – In addition to the review process specifications in the existing Agreement, this Addendum includes the option for New York providers to engage in AAQEP's Initial Accreditation process. Site visits for Initial Accreditation status are virtual, and NYSED staff are invited to attend; the size of the virtual review team is determined by program size and complexity.

**Section 7: Accreditation Decisions** – In addition to the 7-year accreditation status specified in the existing Agreement, this Addendum includes recognition of the award of Initial Accreditation status by the AAQEP Accreditation Commission. It further recognizes that, AAQEP awards Initial Accreditation for a nonrenewable term of up to 5 years.

All other terms and conditions of the original Agreement remain unchanged and in effect.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Addendum to the original Agreement as of the date and year set forth below.

For AAQEP:



Mark LaCelle-Peterson  
President and CEO

May 4, 2023.  
Date

For NYSED:



Aaron M. Baldwin  
Deputy Counsel and Authorized  
Signatory  
New York State Education  
Department

5/8/23  
Date