

State Readiness Tool—Program Approval Deep Dive

Questions to Consider

5. Adopt rigorous standards for the practices of preparation programs.

- Have we adopted rigorous standards for the practices of preparation programs that are aligned with international best practices and research and that address the diverse needs of students, including English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities?
 - What are the standards to which our state will hold preparation programs accountable? Are we adopting or adapting the Council for the Accreditation of Education Preparation standards or the National Council on Teacher Quality’s process, blending those for our context, or writing new standards? What process was used to make this decision (e.g., performance-based practices, outcome measures, research-based)? Will we need to defend our decision?
 - If we are adapting or writing new standards, when or how will they be written and adopted?
 - Entry: Will we require providers to adjust their candidate admissions to the supply-and-demand data needs of our state? Does the state need to implement a supply-and-demand study? Will we ask providers to design recruitment strategies? Will we permit providers to specialize in preparation programs?
 - Entry: What are the minimum entry requirements for candidates to enter prep programs, and what should be included as evidence (e.g., grade point average, basic skills, assessment of dispositions)? Are these requirements for each individual candidate or the average of the class or cohort? Is there a research base supporting why these requirements were selected?
 - Exit: What criteria will we set for candidates to demonstrate to be recommended for initial licensure? Will these criteria be applied statewide or determined individually for each education preparation provider?
 - How and when will we ask providers to use preservice performance assessments? Will we recommend a single vendor option or a state design, or will we permit provider flexibility by giving guidelines?
 - Will our standards regulate school-based practice (or clinical practice)? Will the regulations include a range of experiences for all candidates (e.g., working with diverse student populations using a multitiered system of support) or allow a provider to specialize? How will we evaluate the quality of the design and implementation of school-based practice experiences? Will we require a minimum length of practical experience across all providers as measured by one consistent metric? What commitments will we ask PK–20 partners to make to the provider to support school-based practice?
 - Will we regulate the selection and compensation of school-based faculty or mentors, or the training of selected teachers for this work?

Source: Council of Chief State School Officers. (2015). *Network for Transforming Educator Preparation—State Readiness Tool, Modified Version*. Washington, DC: Author.



- How critical is it to ensure our program approval standards incorporate best preparation practice from other states or entities and international high-performing countries?
- Will we require evidence of a PK–12 provider partnership in the approval process?
- Do we periodically review the practices of preparation programs to see if they meet these standards as part of the program approval and reauthorization process?
- Do approved preparation programs consistently demonstrate that they meet these standards? If not, what triggers will be used to determine if a review of or visit to the Educator Preparation Programs is warranted in addition to the regularly scheduled review or visit?

Questions to Consider

6. Require alignment of preparation content standards to PK–12 college- and career-ready standards.

- Do our standards for preparation programs require them to demonstrate alignment of their content with our state-adopted PK–12 college- and career-ready standards for all licensure areas?
 - Do the standards require programs to demonstrate the ability to prepare teachers to serve all learners toward college and career readiness, particularly those with challenging learning and behavior needs?
 - If we consider using SPA (Specialized Professional Association) standards, how do we know they are aligned with college and career readiness?
 - Will we set requirements for providers to demonstrate that they have prepared candidates to support student success in college and career readiness in “noncognitive” skills (e.g., academic behaviors, social skills)? If so, which ones are most critical?
 - Will we set requirements for providers to demonstrate that they have prepared candidates to support student success in core academic skills across curricula (e.g., data literacy, writing)?
- Do the standards require them to demonstrate alignment of their content with state-adopted definitions of effective teaching and school leadership (e.g., learner-ready teachers and school-ready principals for all students, and especially those who have diverse learning and behavior needs)?
 - How will we set expectations for providers—and what evidence would we ask for—to ensure that candidates understand how to support the expectations of new state or national student assessments?
 - What content exam or other indicator will we ask from providers to demonstrate recommended candidates know the content they will teach? Will this be a program approval requirement or a licensure requirement?
- Do we engage in periodic review of this alignment as part of the program approval and reauthorization process?
 - Do we need to be specific in the policy about expectations for periodic review to ensure this alignment?
- Do approved preparation programs consistently demonstrate evidence of alignment?



Questions to Consider

7. Hold preparation programs accountable for performance.

- Do we exercise the state's preparation program approval authority to drive improvements in program quality?
- Have we established a clear and fair performance rating system that is based primarily on the performance of a program's graduates and its adherence to our standards of content and practice, including addressing the needs of a wide range of learners through the use of evidence-based practices, differentiation, and data-based decision making within tiered systems of support?
 - Will we hold ALL providers to the same criteria to become approved to operate a preparation program in our state? If so, what additional authority is required, if any?
 - If not, will we need to explain and defend that decision? Or will we have different criteria and process for some providers (e.g., alternative programs)?
 - Will we hold programs that do not have a physical presence in our state (e.g., online providers) accountable for their performance? If so, what steps will be taken?
 - Will we include a performance rating system in our policy other than what is required by Title II of the Higher Education Act?
 - What policy guidance should be included regarding the use of K–12 student achievement data attributed to the provider's graduates as an indicator of the program's effectiveness?
- Is this rating system attached to real rewards and consequences for programs (e.g., funding)?
 - What rewards, incentives, and sanctions should be addressed in a policy on program approval?
- Do we have the resources to conduct reviews that produce accurate and reliable ratings for preparation programs?
- Do we make those ratings transparent to the EPP, the public, and potential students?
 - How will we communicate the performance ratings or other performance data of our approved providers? To what audiences? Is communication of those ratings a state responsibility, a responsibility of the EPP, or a shared responsibility?
- Do we use those ratings to ensure that poorly performing programs do not license educators in our state?
 - How will we develop the process and policies for closing individual licensure programs offered by providers that demonstrate continuous low performance?
 - How will we develop the process and policies for closing an entire educator preparation provider (multiple programs) that demonstrates continuous low performance?



Questions to Consider

8. Use program approval data to help preparation programs improve performance.

- Do we use data from the program approval system to drive the support we provide to preparation programs, including data that informs capacity to support struggling and diverse learners?
 - What data will we collect and what feedback will we provide from reviewers to provide guidance for improvement?
- Do we have a system for differentiating our support to preparation programs based on performance and adherence to standards?
 - Will your state policy stipulate support and resources to preparation programs? Will this support be differentiated? Whose responsibility will it be?
 - What is the period of time—and the measure of acceptable progress for a provider that is initially viewed as low performing or at risk?
- Do we establish strong feedback-and-support relationships with EPPs that help programs significantly improve their performance over time?
 - How will you transition programs to a revised program-approval process?
 - What will the feedback to the providers look like? How will it be delivered?

