

# TSPC – AAQEP COOPERATION AGREEMENT

Between the  
Oregon Teacher Standards and Practices Commission  
and the  
Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation

This agreement establishes a framework for cooperation between the Oregon Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) 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 Oregon. The purpose of this agreement is to support quality assurance, continuous improvement, and innovation in educator preparation by entities approved by TSPC as they seek and maintain national accreditation through AAQEP.

AAQEP affirms TSPC's efforts to ensure quality preparation of educators to meet the needs of Oregon children, families, schools, and communities and commits to ensuring quality educator preparation by providers approved by TSPC. By entering this agreement, TSPC 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.

Accreditation-specific terminology and definitions used by AAQEP as part of its provider review and accreditation processes may vary from similar terms and definitions used by TSPC. Any definitions of key terms and glossaries created by AAQEP are available in the Guide to AAQEP Accreditation (available at <https://aaqep.org>). TSPC shall inquire with AAQEP about the definition of any term if there is uncertainty regarding its meaning in the AAQEP Accreditation context.

## **1. Standards Used in Quality Assurance Reviews in Oregon**

Quality Assurance Reviews conducted by AAQEP in Oregon 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 providers approved by TSPC, AAQEP will require that all relevant Oregon standards be addressed. Oregon State-Specific Unit-Level Standards Response Reports should be integrated into the On-Site Reports, including, placing the state-specific ELL standard under aspect 4e, since the AAQEP standards do not specifically address ELL.

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 Oregon**

The scope of AAQEP accreditation sought by providers in Oregon must include all programs registered with or recognized by TSPC that require continuous accreditation, effective no later than July 1, 2025, as specified in OAR 584-400-0015. In addition to programs specified above, the provider may, at its discretion, choose to include additional programs of study leading to a degree or certificate designed for those intending to work as, or already working as, educational professionals. For such programs of study, where no state standards are specified, the provider shall identify any standards in addition to the AAQEP standards to which its program(s) is(are) aligned.

### **3. Quality Assurance Review Process**

All Quality Assurance Reviews will be guided by AAQEP's policies and procedures as specified in the Guide to Accreditation, available at <https://aaqep.org>, as well as TSPC policies and procedures, as specified in Oregon Administrative Rule.

AAQEP's process includes a proposal review stage prior to a scheduled site visit. Oregon providers will be approved to begin working with AAQEP contingent on writing a proposal that is reviewed as 'complete' by AAQEP staff. A successful proposal will include, but not be limited to, demonstration that appropriate data sources are available to address the standards and reliability and validity have been empirically investigated. After a provider's initial review with AAQEP, the proposal step is optional unless the provider ceases then returns to work with AAQEP.

AAQEP will ensure site visits are conducted in accordance with the timelines identified on the TSPC Site Visit Schedule.

Timelines established for unit reviews and consideration of requests for extensions will be decided by AAQEP and TSPC on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with AAQEP and TSPC policies.

All Quality Assurance Reviews include an off-site review two to three months prior to each site visit. Off-site reviews are conducted virtually and TSPC staff are welcome to attend as observers. A report of the off-site review will be distributed to the provider with a copy to TSPC at least two months prior to the Quality Assurance Review. Quality Assurance Reviews also include an on-site visit, the scope of which is determined by provider size and complexity.

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

Quality Assurance Reviews will be joint reviews, including AAQEP-designated member(s) and TSPC-designated member(s).

- *Appointment of reviewers:* Nominations for reviewers for each review case, as agreed to by AAQEP and the provider hosting the review, are to be made as follows:
  - AAQEP will appoint one Quality Assurance Review Team member who will serve as the team's leader.
  - TSPC will nominate one state reviewer, whose role will be to attend to Oregon state-specific unit-level standards reported by the provider under Aspect 4e of the AAQEP Standards.
  - The provider will nominate a local practitioner, who shall be a currently-serving or recently-retired P-12 educator, in keeping with the qualifications stated in the AAQEP Guide to Accreditation.
  - Thereafter, AAQEP and TSPC will alternatively nominate AAQEP-trained reviewers for the review team. AAQEP-nominated reviewers must be deemed acceptable to TSPC.
  - The total number of reviewers assigned to the Quality Assurance Review team will be determined by AAQEP and TSPC based on the complexity of the programs offered at the unit or for other unique circumstances. Examples: Separate leadership program or multiple campuses.
  - A TSPC staff member will participate as a state consultant, at TSPC's discretion. The state consultant will serve as a liaison between AAQEP and

the provider. The state consultant will be included in meetings and will serve as a resource to the team members.

- Other observers, including those seeking a better understanding of the AAQEP process, may participate as agreed to by AAQEP and the host provider.

*Training:* AAQEP will collaborate with TSPC to plan, design, and implement a range of training opportunities for reviewers. Additional training events may be arranged, including events in Oregon, on a cost-recovery basis, with arrangements negotiated according to AAQEP's policies regarding expenses for training. Exceptions may be made by mutual agreement of AAQEP and TSPC.

*TSPC state-specific standards:* TSPC reserves the right to have other state-appointed individuals who may not have received the AAQEP training participate in the review of non-AAQEP state-specific standards if such standards are reviewed concurrently with the joint unit review team. AAQEP shall include Oregon-specific standards in the accreditation process.

## **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 TSPC staff at no cost (though AAQEP will not cover travel expenses); TSPC staff and other observers need not have participated in the training as a condition for joining review teams as a state consultant or observer(s).

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

All decisions for state program approval are within the sole authority of TSPC. The decision to approve or not approve provider programs will be made independent of any AAQEP determinations regarding accreditation of the provider. The parties agree the rules and standards for program approval in Oregon are subject to change at any time by the Oregon Legislature or TSPC and such rules, as amended, will govern the decision for ultimate approval of a provider.

In granting program approval, TSPC may utilize information generated from AAQEP's review of a provider, including, but not limited to, an AAQEP decision on AAQEP accreditation and the assignment of any Concerns and Conditions, as described in AAQEP policy. TSPC will use, but is not bound to, information from AAQEP.

Providers subject to the jurisdiction of TSPC may choose from the following program review options for AAQEP accreditation:

- *Specialty Program Review with National Recognition:* The goal of the Specialized Professional Association (SPA) Program Review with National Recognition is to align specialty licensure area data with national standards developed by SPAs in order to receive national recognition at the program level. The site team may, but is not required to, consider the National Recognition decision available in SPA program level reports as evidence to meet the sufficiency criteria related to AAQEP Standards. TSPC makes the final decision on the approval of all programs.
- *State Review by State Authority:* TSPC conducts program reviews for purposes of state approval and to inform AAQEP accreditation. A provider selecting the State Review option will follow TSPC guidelines. TSPC provides direction on how to meet all State standards for licensure/certificate program approval. Upon a provider's

completion of TSPC authority forms, trained reviewers are selected and assigned within appropriate content areas. Reviewers make recommendations for further action and/or approval. TSPC makes the final decision on the approval of any program.

## **7. Accreditation Decisions**

AAQEP 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. State consultants from TSPC and other observers are welcome to attend meetings of the Accreditation Commission at which cases of Oregon providers are considered (meetings are typically conducted via video conference). Accreditation decisions, including the reports on which decisions are based and the Accreditation Commission's rationale for each decision, will be shared with the TSPC Executive Director through the Director of Program Approval.

All decisions for state unit approval are within the sole authority of TSPC and the decision to approve or not approve a provider will be made independent of any AAQEP determinations regarding its accreditation of the provider. The parties agree that the rules and standards for program and unit approval in Oregon are subject to change at any time by the Oregon Legislature or TSPC, and such rules, as amended, would govern the decision for TSPC's ultimate approval of providers.

Throughout the term of this agreement, in order to maintain accreditation, providers must comply with AAQEP policies, including submission of annual reports.

If the AAQEP Accreditation Committee issues a decision to deny or revoke accreditation, the provider will have a right to petition for an appeal, consistent with the [AAQEP Appeals Policy](https://aaqep.org/appeals-policy) (<https://aaqep.org/appeals-policy>).

If an Oregon provider petitions for the appeal of a decision of the Accreditation Committee, AAQEP will notify TSPC that such petition has been received.

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

Providers seeking AAQEP accreditation will ensure that TSPC 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 TSPC at the same time they provide it to AAQEP.

AAQEP will communicate scheduled times of its off-site and on-site reviews with TSPC staff as specified in this agreement. AAQEP will apprise the TSPC Director of Program Approval of the schedule of Accreditation Commission meetings at which cases from Oregon providers will be considered. In addition, AAQEP will provide the TSPC Executive Director with copies of all reports or official letters for Oregon providers generated by the review team and by the Accreditation Commission.

At any time, TSPC may file a complaint regarding a provider with the Accreditation Commission for investigation and consideration as part of the provider's ongoing cycle of AAQEP Accreditation.

## **9. AAQEP Capacity Review and Formative Support Options**

AAQEP will make available to Oregon providers, in cooperation with and at the discretion of TSPC, two additional services:

- At TSPC's request, AAQEP will conduct capacity reviews of entities seeking first-time approval as a new Oregon-approved educator preparation provider. Such reviews will be conducted prior to the operation of the unit to provide TSPC with a third-party review to inform a program approval decision. Such reviews will be designed and conducted in partnership with TSPC using the AAQEP standards as the framework.
- Conditions precedent of accreditation: AAQEP also facilitates program and provider improvement for entities that have identified specific shortcomings in their work, including cases where shortcomings have been identified through external evaluations such as state or accreditation reviews. AAQEP will include any NCATE or CAEP-identified AFIIs, stipulations and conditions within its review of the provider. AAQEP will enter into an agreement with the provider, subject to TSPC approval, to establish a timeline, priorities, and outcomes for such reviews.

## **10. Membership**

AAQEP views cooperation among accreditors, educator preparation providers, and State Education Authorities (SEAs) as essential to effective quality assurance. It enters into this agreement with the intent of supporting both TSPC and providers authorized by it in ensuring the preparation of excellent and effective teachers and other professional educators. TSPC 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 Oregon at reasonable cost. TSPC staff may participate in any AAQEP activities offered within Oregon at no cost (AAQEP cannot cover travel expenses, meals, or lodging). AAQEP will also provide one TSPC staff member with a no-cost registration to its annual Quality Assurance Symposium and provide any additional TSPC staff registration at the reduced member rate. In addition, TSPC staff may participate in AAQEP professional learning events, including reviewer training, at no cost (travel, etc., excepted, as indicated above).

## **11. Transitions from Another National Accредitor:**

Providers with NCATE or CAEP accreditation will be required to meet AAQEP Standards after the expiration of their current term of accreditation.

**Annual Reports:** All NCATE- or CAEP-accredited providers transitioning to AAQEP are required to submit annual reports to AAQEP through the duration of their current term using the AAQEP annual report template.

**Member in Good Standing with AAQEP:** An NCATE- or CAEP-accredited provider in good standing is considered to be continuously accredited. Upon expiration of the provider's NCATE or CAEP term of accreditation, the transitioning provider's next accreditation review must be based on AAQEP standards and policies.

## **12. AAQEP Reporting Requirements to TSPC:**

AAQEP will provide an annual update on its internal development and continuous improvement plan activities.

## **13. Agreement term**

The term of this Agreement shall be from July 1, 2021, until June 30, 2024, unless modified by the provisions herein.

This agreement may be terminated or modified at any time prior to the expiration date of the agreement at the request of either party with ninety (90) days' written notice to the other party.



7/27/2021

Mark LaCelle-Peterson  
CEO and President,  
AAQEP

Date



Dr. Anthony  
Rosilez, Executive  
Director  
TSPC

Date