

VI. D.

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION Hartford

TO BE PROPOSED:

September 2, 2015

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-145d-9(g)(1)(C) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, grants probationary approval to the Charter Oak State College (COSC), Alternate Route to Certification, Early Childhood Education Program (ECEARC), for the period September 30, 2015, through September 30, 2018, and requires the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to conduct an on-site visit no later than spring 2018 to determine progress towards meeting requirements described by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards 1, 2, 3 and 4, as well as focused monitoring of the program until the on-site visit, including a review and evaluation of annual progress reports, for the purpose of certifying graduates from ECEARC, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Approved by a vote of _____ this second day of September, Two Thousand Fifteen.

Signed: _____
Dianna R. Wentzell, Secretary
State Board of Education

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner of Education

DATE: September 2, 2015

SUBJECT: Continuing Approval of the Charter Oak State College Early Childhood Education Alternate Route to Certification Program

Executive Summary

Introduction

Connecticut statutes require State Board of Education (SBE) approval of all educator preparation programs leading to Connecticut educator certification. Once approved, programs are required to seek continuing approval every five years based on an on-site visiting team process conducted by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE). Visiting teams consist of Connecticut educators trained in the CSDE visit process.

Although not required by Connecticut, programs may also voluntarily seek national accreditation through the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), in addition to continuing program approval through the SBE. If a program is seeking both continuing state program approval and NCATE accreditation, the visit is a joint visit, conducted by NCATE and the CSDE in accordance with the NCATE/Connecticut State Partnership Agreement, with the visiting team consisting of both national and state team members.

Both state program approval and NCATE accreditation require that programs meet the six performance-based NCATE standards (Attachment A), along with Connecticut certification and educator preparation regulations.

Currently approved by the SBE only, the Charter Oak State College (COSC) Early Childhood Education Alternate Route to Certification (ECEARC) Program hosted its mandated state continuing approval visit in spring 2015. This report presents a summary of visiting team findings for the spring 2015 visit, including the Commissioner of Education's recommendation regarding continuing program approval for ECEARC.

History/Background

The state's only public, online, degree-granting institution, COSC provides affordable and alternative opportunities for adults seeking to earn undergraduate and graduate degrees and certificates. Established in 1973 and accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), COSC began as a distance learning college that assisted adult learners in completing a college degree by accepting credits earned at other accredited institutions or

through other nontraditional entrance and assessment requirements, such as standardized testing (e.g., College Level Examination Program tests); completion of non-collegiate sponsored programs (e.g., military or government employee learning programs); completion of certain certification or licensure programs; and other assessment options (e.g., portfolio review). In 1998, COSC began offering courses online, and today offers over 180 distance learning courses, which can be taken to earn credits towards a bachelor's or associate's degree, or a professional certificate.

The COSC ECEARC enables individuals who demonstrate a commitment to the field and possess a solid foundation in either early childhood education or a related field to become qualified to serve as an early childhood educator for the birth through Grade 5 population (#112 teaching endorsement) in a variety of settings, such as public preschools, birth to three early intervention service organizations, and public school kindergartens. ECEARC is a one-year, intensive program during which candidates receive a minimum of 345 contact hours of instruction, participate in directed field experiences and a four-week internship, and complete coursework, assignments and various assessments for eight training modules. Program candidates complete on-line coursework as well as meet for weekend classes on Saturdays twice a month. ECEARC began with eight candidates in 2008, and increased to 12 candidates in 2012-2013, 20 candidates in 2013-2014, and 25 candidates in 2014-2015.

The current state program approval visit was conducted April 29, 2015, in accordance with the CSDE on-site visit protocol. The state visiting team determined that ECEARC is meeting NCATE standards 3, 4, 5, and 6, but is currently not meeting requirements described by NCATE standards 1 and 2. Additionally, two Areas for Improvement (AFI) were identified by the team, one for standard 3 and one for standard 4:

Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions
Visiting Team Decision: Not Met

(1) AFI: The unit lacks sufficient data to demonstrate that program candidates possess the pedagogical and professional knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions described by professional, state, and institutional standards.

Rationale for AFI: Currently, ECEARC does not have a fully developed and implemented assessment system and has no substantial data that provide evidence of candidates' pedagogical and professional knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions.

Standard 2: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation
Visiting Team Decision: Not Met

(1) AFI: The unit lacks an assessment system for program evaluation purposes as required by NCATE standards.

Rationale for AFI: Currently, ECEARC does not have a fully developed and implemented assessment system and has no substantial data providing evidence of how candidates' pedagogical and professional knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions are assessed, how data are analyzed and interpreted, and how data are used to inform programmatic changes and improve candidate performance. Of particular concern is the absence of assessments that measure candidate competencies relative to national content standards. Additionally, the assessments currently being used in the program require

further development in order to reliably and validly measure candidate competencies relative to national content standards. The unit also does not take effective steps to ensure that assessment administration is fair, accurate, consistent, and free of bias. Finally, the unit is not currently using information technology to support system infrastructure and facilitation of data accessibility, aggregation, and analyses.

Standard 3: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

Visiting Team Decision: Met

(1) AFI: The unit lacks a key assessment for the evaluation of the culminating fieldwork placement (internship) that aligns with NCATE assessment requirements (key assessment #4).

Rationale for AFI: NCATE assessment requirements include the measurement of candidate competencies described by national content standards during the student teaching, internship, or culminating fieldwork placement experience.

Standard 4: Diversity

Visiting Team Decision: Met

(1) AFI: The unit's fieldwork placements and internship experience are not formally tracked.

Rationale for AFI: NCATE requires that educator preparation programs track student teaching, internship and/or field placements to ensure that candidates have opportunities to teach in diverse settings as part of their training.

Standard 5: Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development

Visiting Team Decision: Met

No AFIs identified.

Standard 6: Unit Governance and Resources

Visiting Team Decision: Met

No AFIs identified.

Once visits are completed, the CSDE Review Committee (Attachment B) meets to review visiting team findings and make recommendations to the Commissioner of Education relative to continuing approval of preparation programs based upon Connecticut educator preparation program approval regulations (Attachment C). During the June 26, 2015, Review Committee meeting, ECEARC reported to the committee work that had been completed by the program since the spring 2015 visit to address requirements described by NCATE standards 1, 2, 3, and 4, including a specific timeline for ongoing continuous improvement plans. Although at the point of the Review Committee meeting ECEARC had completed a significant amount of required work, including the development of several key assessments, ECEARC still needs to report to the committee on candidate performance data based on newly-developed assessments. Given the seriousness of two failed standards and unmet requirements around data reporting at the time of the on-site visit, the Review Committee recommended probationary approval for ECEARC for the period September 30, 2015, through September 30, 2018, with an on-site visit required no later than spring 2018 to determine progress toward meeting NCATE standard requirements.

Additionally, the committee recommended that the CSDE conduct continuous focused monitoring of ECEARC until the on-site visit, including the review and evaluation of annual progress reports from ECEARC.

Recommendation and Justification

Based upon visiting team findings and the recommendation of the CSDE Program Review Committee, I recommend that ECEARC be granted probationary approval for the period September 30, 2015, through September 30, 2018, with an on-site visit required no later than spring 2018 to determine progress towards meeting NCATE standard requirements. Further, I recommend that the CSDE conduct continuous focused monitoring of ECEARC until the on-site visit, including the review and evaluation of annual progress reports from ECEARC.

Follow-up Activity

If granted probationary approval by the SBE for a three-year period, ECEARC will have until spring 2018 to prepare for and host an on-site visit that addresses the requirements described by NCATE standards 1, 2, 3, and 4. Additionally, the CSDE will conduct focused monitoring of ECEARC until the on-site visit, including the review and evaluation of annual progress reports from ECEARC.

Prepared by: _____
Katie Toohey, Ph.D., Program Approval Coordinator
Bureau of Educator Effectiveness and Professional Learning

Reviewed by: _____
Shannon Marimón, Division Director
Bureau of Educator Effectiveness and Professional Learning

Approved by: _____
Sarah J. Barzee, Ph.D., Chief Talent Officer
Talent Office

Attachment A

National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Professional Standards for the Accreditation of Schools, Colleges, and Departments of Education

Standard 1 – Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions

Candidates preparing to work in schools as teachers or other professional school personnel know and demonstrate the content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

- Content Knowledge for Teacher Candidates
- Pedagogical Content Knowledge and Skills for Teacher Candidates
- Professional and Pedagogical Knowledge and Skills for Teacher Candidates
- Student Learning for Teacher Candidates
- Knowledge and Skills for Other School Professionals
- Student Learning for Other School Professionals
- Professional Dispositions for All Candidates

Standard 2 – Assessment System and Unit Evaluation

The unit has an assessment system that collects and analyzes data on applicant qualifications, candidate and graduate performance, and unit operations to evaluate and improve the unit and its programs.

- Assessment System
- Data Collection, Analysis, and Evaluation
- Use of Data for Program Improvement

Standard 3 – Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

The unit and its school partners design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that teacher candidates and other school personnel develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn.

- Collaboration between Unit and School Partners
- Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Field Experiences and Clinical Practice
- Candidates' Development and Demonstration of Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions to Help All Students Learn

Standard 4 – Diversity

The unit designs, implements, and evaluates curriculum and experiences for candidates to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn. These experiences include working with diverse higher education and school faculty, diverse candidates and diverse students in P-12 schools.

- Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Curriculum and Experiences
- Experiences Working with Diverse Faculty
- Experiences Working with Diverse Candidates
- Experiences Working with Diverse Students in P-12 Schools

Standard 5 – Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development

Faculty are qualified and model best professional practices in scholarship, service, and teaching, including the assessment of their own effectiveness as related to candidate performance; they also collaborate with colleagues in the disciplines and schools. The unit systematically evaluates faculty performance and facilitates professional development.

- Qualified Faculty
- Modeling Best Professional Practices in Teaching
- Modeling Best Professional Practices in Scholarship
- Modeling Best Professional Practices in Service Collaboration
- Unit Evaluation of Professional Education Faculty Performance
- Unit Facilitation of Professional Development

Standard 6 – Unit Governance and Resources

The unit has the leadership, authority, budget, personnel, facilities, and resources, including information technology resources, for the preparation of candidates to meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

- Unit Leadership and Authority
- Unit Budget
- Personnel
- Unit Facilities
- Unit Resources Including Technology

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Educator Preparation Program Approval Review Committee, 2013-2016

HIGHER EDUCATION REPRESENTATION	K-12 REPRESENTATION	COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION	CSDE/OHE REPRESENTATION (non-voting members)
Dr. Helen Abadiano Chair, Reading and Language Arts Department School of Education and Professional Studies Central Connecticut State University 9/2013-9/2016	Joseph Bonillo Educator, History/Social Studies Clark Lane Middle School Waterford Public Schools 9/2013-9/2016		
Dr. Maureen Fitzpatrick Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership Isabelle Farrington College of Education Sacred Heart State University 9/2013-9/2016	Kenneth DiPietro Superintendent Plainfield Public Schools 9/2013-9/2016		
Dr. Hari Koirala Chair, Department of Education School of Education and Professional Studies Eastern Connecticut State University 9/2013-9/2016	Dr. David Erwin Superintendent Berlin Public Schools 9/2013-9/2016		
Dr. Patricia Mulcahy-Ernt Director, Graduate Programs, Literacy/English Education Director, Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching University of Bridgeport 9/2013-9/2016	Dr. Erin McGurk Director, Education Services Ellington Public Schools 9/2013-9/2016		
Dr. Nancy Niemi Chair, Department of Education University of New Haven 9/2013-9/2016	Dr. Salvatore Menzo Superintendent Wallingford Public Schools 9/2013-9/2016		

**Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies for Educator Preparation Program Approval
Section 10-145d-9(g)**

Board action

After reviewing the recommendation of the Review Committee, the Commissioner shall make one or more recommendations to the Board. Based on the Commissioner's recommendation, the Board shall take one of the following actions.

(1) For programs requesting continuing approval:

- (A) Grant full program approval for five years, or for a period of time to bring the program into alignment with the five year approval cycle. The Board may require that an interim report be submitted to the Department, on a date set by the Board, prior to the end of the approval period.
- (B) Grant provisional approval for a time period not to exceed three years, if substantial non-compliance with current standards is identified. The institution shall submit to the Review Committee, on a date set by the Board, a written report which addresses the professional education unit's progress in meeting the standards which were not fully met. The Board may require an on-site visit in addition to this report.
- (C) Grant probationary approval for a time period not to exceed three years, if significant and far-reaching non-compliance with current standards is identified. The institution shall submit to the Review Committee, on a date set by the Board, a written report which addresses the professional education unit's progress in meeting the standards which were not fully met. The Board shall require an on-site visit in addition to this report.
- (D) Deny approval.

(2) For new programs in institutions which have current approved programs:

- (A) Grant full program approval for a period of time to bring the new program into the five year approval cycle of all other programs offered by the institution. The Board may require that a written report be submitted to the Department, on a date set by the Board, prior to the end of the approval period.
- (B) Grant provisional approval for a time period not to exceed three years, if substantial non-compliance with current standards is identified. The institution shall submit to the Review Committee, on a date set by the Board, a written report which addresses the professional education unit's progress in meeting the standards which were not fully met. The Board may require an on-site visit in addition to this report.

- (C) Grant probationary approval not to exceed three years, if significant and far-reaching non-compliance with current standards is identified. The institution shall submit to the Review Committee, on a date set by the Board, a written report which addresses the professional education unit's progress in meeting the standards which were not fully met. The Board shall require an on-site visit in addition to this report.
- (D) Deny approval.

(3) For new programs starting in institutions without other approved programs:

- (A) Grant program approval for two years. The institution shall submit to the Review Committee, after two semester of operation a written report which addresses the professional education unit's progress in implementing the new program. The Board shall require an on-site visit in addition to this report.
- (B) Following the on-site visit after two years of operation, grant full program approval for three years. The Board may require that a written report be submitted to the Department, on a date set by the Board, prior to the end of the approval period.
- (C) Following the on-site visit after two years of operation, grant provisional approval for a time period not to exceed three years, if substantial non-compliance with current standards is identified. The institution shall submit to the Review Committee, on a date set by the Board, a written report which addresses the professional education unit's progress in meeting the standards which were not fully met. The Board may require an on-site visit in addition to this report.
- (D) Following the on-site visit after two years of operation, grant probationary approval for up to three years, if significant and far-reaching non-compliance with current standards is identified. The institution shall submit to the Review Committee, on a date set by the Board, a written report which addresses the professional education unit's progress in meeting the standards which were not fully met. The Board shall require an on-site visit in addition to this report.
- (E) Deny approval.