
Teacher Preparation Program Approval Cycle

The Background:

Since 1989, Tennessee has been a partner state with the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The partnership agreement with NCATE ensures the teacher preparation units in Tennessee teacher preparation programs are evaluated through the application of a consistent set of national standards.

The NCATE accreditation process and the State approval processes have been based on a five year cycle for program providers seeking first-time NCATE accreditation or State approval. A seven year cycle has applied to providers seeking continuing NCATE accreditation or State approval.

The NCATE Executive Committee adopted a change in the accreditation cycle; the seven year accreditation cycle now applies to all teacher preparation units, those seeking first-time accreditation and those seeking continuing accreditation. NCATE has requested partner states to adopting the seven year cycle.

In order to maintain consistency in the manner in which all Tennessee teacher preparation programs are assessed and to coordinate on-site visit schedules with NCATE, the Department of Education proposes extending the approval cycle for all State approval of teacher preparation units to a seven-year cycle.

The extension of the approval cycle from five years to seven years does not effect fully approved licensure programs offered by teacher preparation units. Conditionally approved new programs that have produced program completers will be evaluated on-site within three years of achieving conditional approval status or during the next scheduled on-site evaluation visit, whichever occurs first.

The SBE's Advisory Council on Teacher Education and Certification will have an opportunity to provide input on this item at their next meeting prior to final approval.

The Master Plan Connection:

Teaching: The change to a seven year teacher preparation unit approval cycle will place all Tennessee teacher preparation units on the same approval cycle and provide consistency with the NCATE accreditation cycle.

The Recommendation:

The Department of Education recommends acceptance of the seven year state approval cycle on first reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.