

Educator Preparation Provider Approval
and
Program Approval
Review Handbook

Guidelines
for
Institutions of Higher Education
in the
State of South Dakota

South Dakota Department of Education
800 Governor's Drive
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-2291
605-773-3134

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Introduction

Educator preparation provider and program review is the process through which a team of educators, along with DOE staff, conduct an assessment of an institution's professional educator preparation program. **South Dakota Codified Law 13-42-3** establishes the authority of the South Dakota State Board of Education Standards to develop the requirements that institutions must meet in order to gain approval of their educator preparation programs. These requirements are set forth in **ARSD 24:53 Educator Preparation Program Approval**. **ARSD 24:53:02:01** states, "In order to be eligible to request approval of programs that prepare educational personnel to meet certification requirements in accordance with **ARSD 24:53**, institutions must provide evidence of compliance with regional accreditation and eligibility for Title IV funding as stated in **SDCL 13-49-27.1**. At least once every seven years, the SDDOE will conduct a review of the educator preparation provider and each program for the preparation of education personnel offered by a four-year regionally accredited institution that has applied for state approval. After the department has verified that the standards in **ARSD 24:53** have been met by the educator preparation provider and each program, the South Dakota State Board of Education Standards may grant initial or continuing approval to the educator preparation provider and program(s) that were reviewed. In order to receive and maintain approval, the educator preparation provider must submit the following to the department every seven years:

- 1) A Self-Study Report, as outlined in the department's *Educator Preparation Provider and Program Approval Review Handbook for Institutions of Higher Education in the State of South Dakota*; and
- 2) Evidence of candidate competencies as required in **ARSD 24:53:04, 24:53:10 and 24:53:11.**

For institutions seeking initial or continuing accreditation from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), the SDDOE shall conduct joint reviews of the educator preparation provider and its education programs as outlined in the partnership agreement between the SDDOE and CAEP.

Background

The evolution of educator preparation provider and program approval can be divided into several phases. In the first phase, candidates took courses, completed degree requirements and applied for certification. The SDDOE examined the applicant information and issued a certificate based upon the applicant's successful completion of a state approved program.

In the second phase, the state established standards for educator preparation provider and program approval. Review teams visited the universities and colleges to review the facilities, budgetary allocations and resources, and required courses and field experiences to determine response to the standards.

The third phase of educator preparation provider and program approval began with the "performance assessment" focus around the year 2000. In this phase, teams selected by SDDOE went to the preparing institutions and reviewed the evidence of the candidates' knowledge and competence. The most important documents were the evidence that supported the assessment of the candidates' knowledge and competence e.g., examinations, journals, videotapes, lesson plans, and

all of the items that might be found in a portfolio. The focus of the review was on the institution's ability to prepare and assess the knowledge and competence of candidates prior to recommending them for certification.

The final phase has transitioned into the current phase of educator preparation provider and program approval. Many national accrediting bodies have asked institutions to gather data on P-12 student learning. The achievement of the P-12 students is the ultimate performance that professional educators are being prepared to enhance. Many variables come into play when assessing performance on the P-12 level. Some of those variables may be beyond the control of veteran teachers, and even more difficult for novice teachers. Still, this challenge represents the frontier to which educator preparation provider and program approval is directed.

Hopefully, this handbook and the policies and requirements established within, will foster improved preparation provider programs and ultimately, high quality professional educators that the children of South Dakota deserve and upon whom the future of our state depends.

This handbook is intended to guide all of the South Dakota preparing institutions through the process of gaining state educator preparation provider and program approval.

Institutions seeking CAEP accreditation should access the CAEP website for detailed information on the review process.

Self-Study Report and Program Report Overview

Institutions seeking CAEP educator preparation provider accreditation must comply with the guidelines and timelines for preparing a Self-Study Report that are established by CAEP. Each non-CAEP institution is required to prepare a Self-Study Report as described in this Handbook, and must send a copy to the state consultant. If possible, a web-based system of information management could be implemented. The state consultant can review the specific information to be sent during the technical assistance meeting.

The educator preparation provider and program review process focuses on making a determination of the degree to which the institution and its educator preparation programs comply with the standards and guidelines identified in **ARSD 24:53**. During the review process, institutions are required to assemble evidence to support the information presented in their Self-Study Report on how those standards and guidelines are met. *(The self-study report template can be found on the DOE website.)*

In addition to the educator preparation provider standards, institutions are required to prepare program review materials that address the specific programs, published in **ARSD 24:53**, for each educator preparation program they intend to offer. The programs that have national standards are aligned with the specialized professional association standards (SPA) and identify the programmatic requirements of each certification area. Programs not associated with a national professional association will show compliance with standards specifically adopted by the state for that program. Reports will be sent to the state consultant electronically at six months to one year prior to the on-site visit. *(The program report templates can be found on the DOE website.)*

Preparing the Program Reports for Program Review

Templates to be used for Program Reports can be found on the SDDOE website

The program report consists of a Cover Sheet and five sections. The Cover Sheet provides basic information about the program being submitted. Section I presents background and contextual information about the program; Section II includes a chart that lists each of the 6-8 assessments; Section III includes a chart that links the 6-8 assessments with the program standards; Section IV provides a narrative explanation for how each assessment addresses the standards and what the assessment data says about candidate proficiency; and Section V provides information on how the program faculty have used the data to improve their program. The following information supplies more detail about each section of the Program Report including information on how the reviewer will use each section as they complete their evaluation.

Section I--Context

Section I, the Context Section of the program report, should provide background information for the reviewer. It includes descriptions of faculty expertise and experience in the specialty field, relationship of assessments used in the program to the educator preparation provider's assessment system, and the program of study together with the field and clinical experiences required for the program. Concerns, strengths, or deficiencies found in this part of the program report may be seen in the evidence provided for the subsequent sections of the report and may serve to explain that evidence. If, as the reviewer reads Section I, they have strong concerns about the faculty, curriculum or other components of the program, they may note them on their Reviewer Worksheet and/or include them in Part F, item F.1, of the Program Recognition Report.

Section II—Assessments and Related Data

Section II is a chart that program compilers will use to list the key assessments. Reviewers will be using this information as they work through Section III and IV.

Section III—Standards Assessment Chart

The chart in Section III links the assessments to the standards. Each standard is listed in the first column. In the final column compilers have checked the numbers of the assessments (from the chart in Section II) that they feel address each standard. Each standard should be addressed by a triangulation of data.

Section IV--Evidence for Meeting Standards.

In Section IV compilers provide a narrative for each of their key assessments. In this narrative they are asked to provide a very brief description of the assessment, describe how the assessment addresses the standards (as checked in the chart in Section III), summarize the data for the assessment, and then provide a rationale for how the data demonstrates candidate mastery of the cited standards. They will also attach three documents for each assessment: the assessment instrument (or complete descriptions of the assessments), the scoring guide for each assessment, and a chart that includes the data for each assessment.

How much data must be presented?

SDDOE will be expecting 2-3 cycles of data for each of the 6-8 assessments. The only reason that reviewers might give institutions some leeway is in those instances in which a program had to make some radical shifts in their assessments because of the limitation to 6 to 8 assessments. In order to limit that number to 8 they have not had the time to collect data on their new more comprehensive assessments. It is possible that a program has only 1-2 cycles of data, due to the implementation and visit schedule, and to program adjustments. These situations should be noted in the data provided in the program report.

How many of the assessments must be performance-based?

All of the assessments should be those in which the candidates demonstrate their mastery of the standard and should be appropriate for the standards being addressed. Most of the assessments should include activities--tasks that are conducted in a classroom, that provide direct measures of classroom performance, or are similar to daily activities a candidate would face in initial employment.

Reviewers will use this information to answer two primary questions: are the assessments appropriate for the cited standards and do the candidate data demonstrate that most candidates meet the standard. The information in Section IV should give insight into how the faculty perceive the assessments align with the standards and provide information about any data that appear questionable or, perhaps, absent.

Section V—Use of Assessment Results to Improve Candidate and Program Performance

The purpose of the final portion of the program report, Section V, is to demonstrate that faculty has used results from the key assessments to improve candidate achievement and program performance. The program report template includes these directions to report compilers:

The description should not link improvements to individual assessments but, rather, summarize principal findings from the evidence, the faculty's interpretation of those findings, and changes made in (or planned for) the program as a result. Describe the steps program faculty has taken to use information from assessments for improvement of both candidate performance and the program. This information should be organized around (1) content knowledge, (2) professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills, and (3) effects on P-12 student learning.

Reviewer evaluation comments on this portion of the program report are placed in Part D of the Program Recognition Report.

Preparing the Self-Study Report

Each institution seeking approval is required to prepare a Self-Study Report document that identifies how the institution meets the requirements established under **ARSD 24:53**. Each institution should obtain a copy of the **State Accreditation Self-Study Report Template** prior to beginning the Self-Study Report development process. This template should be used to complete the Self-Study Report. A copy of this document is posted on the Department of Education's website at <http://doe.sd.gov/>.

When an institution begins the approval process, the emphasis should be on improving the educator preparation provider and its program(s) by examining its present design and performance in light of the standards and guidelines. Once the institution has identified this information and assigned the responsibility for conducting the internal review of the various aspects of the program(s), it is ready to begin the writing of the Self-Study Report.

The content of the Self-Study Report should include an introduction that provides an overview of the institution and familiarizes the review team with the history of the institution and the present educator preparation program.

Responses in the Self-Study Report are written indicating how the institution meets each standard listed in the **ARSD Rules 24:53** governing Educator Preparation Program Approval. In continuing accreditation visits, the Self-Study Report also serves as documentation of the educator preparation provider's growth and development since the last accreditation visit.

The Self-Study Report is to be submitted electronically.

The Self-Study Report should include a cover sheet that identifies:

1. The name and address of the educator preparation provider and institution.
2. The dates of the scheduled visit.
3. The educator preparation provider's website address.
4. The accreditation review coordinator.
5. A table of contents and two sections:

Overview of the Institution;
Evidence for meeting each standard.

Overview of the Institution

This section sets the context of the visit. It should clearly state the mission of the institution and the educator preparation provider. It should also describe the characteristics of the educator preparation provider and identify and describe any branch campuses included in the review, other off-campus sites, alternate route programs, and distance learning programs. The overview should include any other information to help the review team understand the educator preparation provider (e.g., residential or commuter, religious affiliation, and demographics/characteristics of the student body.) and help develop an understanding of the mission, standards, and culture of the institution. This section should also list all programs offered by the educator preparation provider that prepare individuals to work in P-12 schools.

This brief summary will introduce the institution to the members of the review team and provide the context for the data that follows.

The Self-Study Report should provide the review team with enough information to suggest that the program(s) is in compliance with the requirements. It is very important to identify the evidence that can be reviewed in support of the institution and its programs meeting the standards and guidelines. The Self-Study Report describes the operation of the institution and the professional educator program in the context of the requirements of the educator preparation provider standards and program guidelines. The Self-Study Report must reference the documents that will be used for verification purposes. The institution should assemble the documentation electronically, as much as possible. Because of the confidential nature of some of the documents, institutions may choose to provide information that identifies where the documents can be obtained and reviewed.

Professional educator programs should develop a course/program matrix that demonstrates how the courses meet the specific program guidelines and how course requirements are used to demonstrate candidate knowledge and competence. The developed matrix should be supported by course syllabi that also identify the required studies and experiences contained in the guidelines. A matrix that simply refers to a syllabus is not an acceptable form of documentation.

It should be noted that the fact that the topics are covered in a course and reflected on the syllabus is only one indication that the guideline is met. The program should document the candidates' "knowledge of and competence in" applying the concepts. To that end, the Self-Study Report should direct the reviewer to the evidence that the candidates learned what was taught. The matrix should reflect this concern. A matrix that merely shows the courses in which the guidelines are covered is inadequate. The matrix should also show the method/product that demonstrates the candidates learned the topics identified in the guidelines and covered in the courses.

Evidence for Meeting Each Standard

In this section the educator preparation provider should discuss the evidence and provide data that demonstrates that it is meeting the standards in each chapter and section in **Article 24:53**.

Supporting documentation may include, but not be limited, to the following:

- Catalogs and other documents describing general education, teaching majors, and advanced degrees.
- Course syllabi for all required courses in each of the teaching majors and advanced degrees. (grouped by program)
- Course syllabi for all general education courses.
- All printed documents relating to the teacher education programs.
- Examples of student work. (Identify the course in which the work was completed.)
- Follow-up studies of graduates conducted over the past three years.
- Handbooks distributed for student teachers and field experiences.
- Written agreements with local schools for student teaching placement and other collaborative activities.
- Admission policies and criteria.
- Documents relating to advising students.
- List of competencies expected at completion of programs and assessments used to ensure these outcomes.
- Faculty handbook.

- Faculty evaluation instruments.
- Documents that describe the governance and operations of the teacher education program. (e.g., organizational chart for instruction)
- Minutes of advisory groups and governing groups.
- Documents listed in the Self-Study Report as sources for verification.
- Documentation of the organizational structure identifying responsibilities.
- Educator preparation provider policies and procedures.
- Candidate portfolios, if applicable.
- Candidate assessment data.

The educator preparation provider is to notify personnel that team members may need access to the record system. Team members may examine student files that contain advising and assessment information, evaluation forms for student teaching, field and/or practicum experiences, and evidence of required competencies.

The Onsite Review

Educator preparation and provider review and program approval is a continuous process that culminates with an on-site review every seven years. The formal process leading up to the review begins about two years before the on-site review when the institution is notified that it will be scheduled for a *review*.

The on-site review dates run two to four consecutive days, beginning the afternoon of the first and concluding by noon on the last day. Usually the reviews start on Sunday afternoon.

Institutions seeking CAEP accreditation must comply with the timelines for requesting dates established by CAEP. The state consultant will confirm the mutually agreed upon dates with the institution and with CAEP.

Each institution that is scheduled for a review may plan a technical assistance meeting with the state consultant prior to the review dates. During this meeting the state consultant will review the *Educator Preparation Provider and Program Review* process and the format for developing the *Self-Study Report* and *Program Report* materials. This meeting is referred to as a technical assistance visit because its purpose is to provide assistance in developing the report materials that will be utilized during the approval review.

Review Team

An *educator preparation provider on-site review team* will be selected to review, audit, and verify findings at an on-site review. The on-site review team will include the state consultant. Its composition may include individuals who possess the knowledge and skills necessary to adequately assess the institution and its components and offer recommendations on how to ensure the educator preparation provider and programs operate within the regulations. The team will be comprised of people trained in the review process.

The institution is responsible for the subsistence, lodging, and travel costs for team members.

Pre-visit

Approximately 60 days prior to the on-site review, the SDDOE consultant may meet with the institution's review coordinator to make the final arrangements for the visit. The pre-visit can be a very important part of the educator preparation provider and program approval process. It provides an opportunity for a focused discussion of the SDDOE expectations and the institution's state of readiness for the activities that will take place during the review. During the pre-visit, the state consultant has the responsibility to interact with the coordinator in establishing the collaborative tone for the review.

During the pre-visit, a draft of the required Self-Study Report should be available in order to review the organization of materials and confirm the size of the team. When an institution intends to use a web-based method for the evidence pieces, the website should be in place and reviewed. A tentative schedule of the on-site activities should be developed. A detailed schedule of activities, interviews, class visits, etc., should be reviewed by the team chair, in coordination with the SDDOE consultant and the institution's coordinator, at least 30 days prior to the actual visit. *A checklist of pre-visit agenda items is in the Appendix section of this Handbook.*

On-site Review

Accreditation visits run from two to four days, beginning with an orientation and team meeting on the first day and ending with an exit report. The institution should provide the review team with a hotel and on-campus workroom for its exclusive use during the visit.

At the conclusion of the visit, the SDDOE consultant will conduct an oral exit report with the appropriate institutional personnel. The institutional personnel who will attend the exit interview are determined by the institution. The purpose of the exit report is to highlight the preliminary findings of the team and to give the institution a sense of what might be included in the final report and recommended to the South Dakota State Board of Education Standards. *The actual findings and recommendations will be formally presented in a report to the state board that will form the basis for the decision on the educator preparation provider and program approval status of the institution.*

Developing the On-site Visit Agenda and Site Preparation

Interviews are another method that the review team will use to verify and validate information presented in the Self-Study Report. A tentative agenda should be developed by the institution and discussed during the pre-visit. In developing the agenda, careful attention should be given to scheduling activities in a manner that ensures that adequate time is allocated to the various aspects of the program. In addition to scheduling time for the team to become familiar with the exhibits and other campus facilities, the team will need to interview administrators, faculty, candidates, and personnel from cooperating local schools.

A typical agenda would begin with a team meeting on the first day of the review. Specific arrangements for the first afternoon and evening should be discussed during the pre-visit. In

making the arrangements, it should be kept in mind that the team has very little time together prior to beginning the on-campus activities. Interviews may take place on this first day. A well-planned first day will get the review off to a good start.

On the morning of the second day, the team should be transported to the campus work room. Interview sessions with various personnel should be scheduled. These sessions should not run more than 40 minutes with a 15-minute break occurring between each. The team is usually divided up in order to cover assigned areas so that concurrent meetings can be scheduled.

A team lunch should be scheduled at a place where the team can discuss the progress of the review and identify areas that may require additional verification. At times it may be necessary to schedule someone for an interview during the lunch, but as a rule, the lunch should be a working lunch for the team members only. The choice of using a campus dining facility or bringing the lunch to the workroom should be discussed during the pre-visit.

Following lunch, the team will continue interviews. Whenever possible, meetings with candidates should be organized into small groups of five to ten candidates. Small groups of faculty, organized by department or function i.e., chairs, are also a viable way of scheduling interviews. The full day on campus is a very long day and as a rule, interviews should not be scheduled after 5:00 pm.

The work room, both on campus and in the motel, should be equipped with any items the review team may need.

On the third day of the review, the team works primarily at the hotel. Normally, the only on-campus activity is the exit report. This usually takes place in the late morning. The specific time should be discussed during the pre-visit and confirmed prior to the team leaving the campus. The exit report allows the team chair to provide the institution with a preliminary list of strengths and concerns. Educator preparation provider and program approval status and specific recommendations are not presented at that time. The representatives from the institution who will be invited to the exit report should be discussed during the pre-visit.

The actual schedule of activities should be negotiated beginning at the pre-visit and continuing through the final on-site review day.

Preparing the Budget

The costs associated with the state consultant's participation in a technical assistance visit prior to the onsite review are the responsibility of the SDDOE.

The costs associated with the review, including the reimbursement for travel, subsistence, and lodging of the team, are the responsibility of the institution. In planning for these costs, the size of the team should be one of the first considerations. An institution should have a sense of the team size when it submits the letter identifying the dates of the review and the options for developing the Self-Study Report and Program Reports.

Hotel accommodations should be planned so that each member of the team has a separate room. The hotel should also have a workroom large enough to accommodate the team. This workroom should be available throughout the review. When possible, the institution should consider selecting a hotel with or near a dining facility. Planned group meals at the hotel and on campus may help in

controlling the budget and reduce the need for the direct reimbursement of team members. When group meals are not planned, the institution should provide for meal charges to be billed to the room. The allowable amount should be made clear to the team chair.

In addition to the obvious meals, the institution should budget for refreshments in the hotel and campus workrooms.

The transportation of team members from the hotel to the campus is one final factor that should be considered in preparing the budget. Details of the transportation plan should be discussed with the state consultant.

Final BOE Report

The state consultant has 30 days to prepare a draft of the BOE report. The report includes the findings of the team members regarding the ability of the institution and its programs to operate in accordance with the requirements identified in **ARSD 24:53**.

The state consultant prepares and forwards a draft of the report, including the team's findings, recommendations, and overall recommendation regarding approval to team members for review and editing. Team members have five days to respond to the consultant. The consultant incorporates revisions from team members and forwards the final BOE report to the institution to review and respond to any items that are factually inaccurate, and standards and guidelines that are considered to be an *area for improvement* or a *stipulation*. A copy of the final report and the institution's response is sent to the institution and a copy is filed at the SDDOE.

Levels of Compliance

The validation process includes rating the extent to which standards have been met. Each standard is rated and assigned a level of compliance based on specific criteria. Determination of the level must be supported by documentation.

Standard Met

A standard may be rated as met when it has been determined through the validation process that the institution clearly meets the expectations of the standard.

Standard Not Met

A standard is rated as not met when it has been determined through the validation process that the intent of the standard has not been addressed or that implementation has been deficient to the extent of negatively affecting the program. The rating must be supported by a description of the documented findings of deficiency, including recommendations, which become a part of the report.

Final approval/accreditation decisions are made by the South Dakota Board of Education Standards and conveyed in writing to the president of the institution and the head of the professional education

program within 30 days of state board approval. Representatives from the institution are invited to be in attendance when the report to the South Dakota Board of Education Standards is delivered.

The South Dakota Board of Education Standards makes one of the four following accreditation decisions:

- 7 year, ***Full Approval***
- 2 year, ***Conditional Approval*** with a visit to the institution to monitor any standard(s) that were determined to have ***significant areas for improvement***.
- 1 year, ***Probationary Approval*** with a visit to the institution to monitor any standard(s) that were determined to be ***not met or with significant areas for improvement***. Those candidates presently in the program as juniors or seniors may complete the program; no new candidates are allowed until the deficiencies are corrected.
- ***Denial, the program approval is removed***. No graduates of such program(s) are authorized for certification, however an institution may appeal. See below for the *appeals process*.

When Conditional or Probationary Approval/Accreditation is granted or when a program(s) is denied approval/accreditation, the institution has sixty (60) days to respond in writing to the state consultant, if it disagrees with the decision.

Any institution that receives *Conditional* or *Probationary Approval* is required to submit a plan for addressing any areas for improvement and a timeline for implementing the corrective action within the time limitations of the approval status. Specifics of reporting and follow-up visits will be negotiated between SDDOE and the institution.

When an institution and/or any of its professional educator programs is Denied or put on Probationary status, the following steps must be taken:

- 1) Terminate the admission of candidates to the program.
- 2) All candidates who are presently enrolled in the program must be formally notified of the decision. The formal notification must explain the basis for the denial or probation and inform each candidate of the courses that must be taken in order to complete the program or transfer into another program.
- 3) A list of the candidates that were notified must be forwarded to the SDDOE. The list must include the name, and the number of credits needed, and the anticipated completion date. The completion date cannot be longer than 3 semesters from the date of the denial.

Conditions for Follow-up Reviews

When an institution or any of its programs receives a Probationary or Conditional Approval for one or two years, a follow-up review must be conducted during the final semester of the approval period. The follow-up review will be conducted by the state consultant. This may be the case in such instances as when advisement sheets are cited as inaccurate or inadequate or when performances on the Praxis examinations are an area for improvement. In other instances, it may be necessary for a programmatic team member(s) to return to the institution for the follow-up. Some examples of this may be when sufficient evidence of candidate knowledge and competence is

unavailable, or when the studies cannot be verified through the syllabi, or when significant programmatic changes have to be implemented due to inadequate scope of studies or field experiences. The costs associated with the follow-up reviews must be paid by the institution.

Discontinuing and/or Modifying a Program

When an institution decides to discontinue a professional educator program, the following procedure should be followed:

- 1) Terminate the admission of candidates to the program.
- 2) All candidates who are presently enrolled in the program must be formally notified of the decision. The formal notification must explain the basis for the denial or probation and inform each candidate of the courses that must be taken in order to complete the program or transfer into another program.
- 3) A list of the candidates that were notified must be forwarded to the SDDOE. The list must include the name, and the number of credits needed, and the anticipated completion date. The completion date cannot be longer than 3 semesters from the date of the denial.

Because this decision may have adverse consequences for the candidates, the institution is responsible for making every effort to facilitate their completion of the program. These efforts should include collaborating with other institutions about accepting coursework, transferring credits, and completing other required activities that candidates may need for certification.

When an institution seeks to modify any of its professional educator programs, the planned modifications should be discussed with the state consultant. Many programmatic changes are minor, such as changes in course sequences and the offering of alternative electives not identified on the advisement sheet utilized during the program approval review. These types of modifications do not need the approval or formal notification of the SDDOE. However, more significant program changes, such as those relating to the Educator Preparation Provider standards or other requirements specifically identified in **ARSD 24:53**, must be submitted in writing at least 90 days prior to the planned implementation date. The submittal must identify: 1) the rationale, 2) the identified changes, 3) the programs, 4) the implementation date, and 5) a revised advisement sheet, when appropriate. The state consultant will review the modification for consistency with the provision of **ARSD 24:53** and provide written notification of acceptance or concerns to the institution.

Appendix A

Program Reviewer Considerations

A. Are the assessments aligned with the program standards?

Assessments must be aligned with the standards—there must be a match between the content of the standard and what the assessment is measuring. It is quite likely that a single assessment could address components of multiple standards (as indicated in the chart in Section III of the program report). Here are some questions that reviewers might ask as they evaluate alignment of the assessments:

- **CONTENT**—Do the same or consistent content topics appear in the assessments that are in the standards?
- **RANGE** —Do the assessments address the range of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are delineated in the standard? Some program standards are very comprehensive, some cover smaller elements. In general, is the preponderance of the content of the standard addressed by the assessments assigned to it? If the program standard is very dense and covers a number of concepts, it is not necessary to check off every single element. It is better to look holistically at the standard as you compare it to the assessments. Program resources should be helpful to when addressing this question.

B. Do the assessments assess meaningful cognitive demands and skill requirements at challenging levels for candidates?

Here are two questions that reviewers might ask as they evaluate this question:

- **COMPLEXITY**—Are the assessments congruent with the complexity, cognitive demands, and skill requirements described in the standards?
- **DIFFICULTY**—Is the level of effort required, or the difficulty or degree of challenge of the assessments, consistent with standards? Is this level reasonable for candidates who are ready to teach or to take on other professional educator responsibilities?
- From what is found in the assessment, the instructions, and the scoring guide, is the assessment measuring what it purports to measure?

Other issues:

- **SPECIFICITY**—Are the assessments vague or poorly defined? The assessments might include an entry like “portfolio entries, test results, observations.” What entries? What test results? What observations? These need to be identified as specific experiences. Is the assessment information oblique or confused? Sometimes the response does not actually address the standard.

- OTHER REMINDERS FOR REVIEW—
 - If grades are used as evidence, then the program report must describe how the content that candidates have studied aligns with program standards, and also what level of proficiency in those standards the grades represent. Institutions cannot claim that an acceptable grade in a course in which an important experience is embedded is sufficient to assume that the specific experience is satisfactory. For example, if a research project in a required course is cited as an example of how candidates meet a program standard, the course grade (which includes many measures beyond the research project) cannot automatically be assumed to reflect information about candidate mastery of the standard.
 - When state licensure examinations are submitted as evidence of preparation, there must be an indication of the content of those exams and how well they are aligned with program standards.

C. Are the assessments free from bias?

From information provided in the program report, reviewers should be able to infer some important qualities about the avoidance of bias. Assessments should be constructed in ways that avoid biases in both language and in testing situations.

Reviewers can consider the following question:

- Are the assessments and their scoring guide free from racial, ethnic, gender, cultural, or other bias?

D. Are the scoring guides clear and are the levels of candidate proficiency they describe distinct and appropriate?

A scoring guide is the tool faculty use to determine candidates' ratings on specific assessments. Scoring guides should address relevant and meaningful attributes of candidate knowledge and performance related to the standards on an assessment task and should be used to reach meaningful decisions. Scoring guides can take many forms (such as Likert scales and rubrics) depending on the assessment activity.

Regardless of the form the scoring guides take, they should have written and shared criteria for judging performance that indicate the qualities by which levels of performance can be differentiated. They should be explicit enough to anchor judgments about the degree of success on a candidate assessment.

Many assessments are little more than checklists completed at the end of the student teaching experience. They do not define what is being sought and the ratings are in some cases mere numbers or words subject to broad interpretation (e.g., 1, 2, or 3; or excellent, good, acceptable). Such instruments do not provide either candidates or supervisors with substantive guidance as to what is being sought.

To be reliable, assessments must be capable of yielding approximately the same values across raters. One way to achieve inter-rater reliability is to train raters, but this is difficult to evaluate in this paper review. A second and more practical approach is to carefully review instruments that are highly explicit as to expectations and ratings.

When evaluating scoring guides, reviewers can consider such questions as the following:

- Are scoring guides clear and explicit about faculty expectations for candidate proficiencies in relation to standards?
- Do scoring guides address relevant and meaningful attributes of candidate performance on an assessment task? Do assessments and scoring guides work together so that different levels of candidate proficiency can be clearly distinguished (Assessment Examples)
- When rubrics are used, is there specific guidance on what a rater might look for?

E. Do the data as reported indicate the extent to which the candidates meet the standard?

The key summarizing question for reviewers is: does the program present convincing evidence that its graduates can demonstrate that they have mastered the program standards? The primary sources of information for you to use to address this question are the data charts for each assessment and the narratives in Section IV for each assessment. This should give a complete picture of the data, how faculty interprets the data, and contextual issues that might have had an impact on the data.

F. Is the standard met?

After answering the previous four questions, reviewers are now asked to make a holistic decision on whether or not the standard is met. In general, most of the previous four questions should be met at the acceptable level for the standard to be met, but this should certainly be a matter of professional judgment. For example, a reviewer may deem that the assessments and scoring guide are appropriate but that the only available data is weak (perhaps it has only been administered one time and the faculty describe plans to change the curriculum appropriately). In this situation, it may be determined that the standard is met even though there are some areas for improvement. In another situation, the assessments may be appropriate but the scoring guide is so weak that the data are essentially useless. In this case, the standard could not be met.

G. Final Program Recognition Decision

After individual decisions have been for each of the standards, a reviewer look at all of these decisions and then make one recognition decision for the program as a whole.

Consideration in Determining a Program Rating

- Number of standards not met.
- Degree of divergence of ratings across standards

Remember. . . .

- There may be many ways to reach the same goal.
- Judgments must be based on standards, not personal opinion.
- Be reasonable, not harsh, nor gullible.

The validation process includes rating the extent to which program standards have been met or not met. Each standard is rated and assigned a level of compliance based on specific criteria. Determination must be supported by documentation.

Standard Met

A standard may be rated as met when it has been determined through the validation process that the program clearly meets the expectations of the standard.

As the report is read, attention should be paid to aspects of the program that are unique and/or that are seen as strengths. There is a section on the Reviewer Worksheet to note these. Strengths can either be specific aspects of the program (e.g. diversity of clinical sites) or more global statements (e.g. a major focus on teaching in urban settings). These will be cited in Part A.3 in the Program Recognition Report.

Standard Not Met

A standard is rated as not met when it has been determined through the validation process that the intent of the standard has not been addressed or that implementation has been deficient to the extent of negatively affecting the program. The rating must be supported by a description of the documented findings of deficiency, including recommendations, which become a part of the report.

Program Reviewer Guidelines for Completing the Program Recognition Report

The Program Recognition Report is the formal document that is completed by SDDOE. It has 5 sections. The following information provides information about each section and describes how to use information from the Reviewer Worksheet to complete the report.

Introductory Information:

Complete this information for each program. This information can be copied from the Cover Sheet of the Program Report.

Part A—Recognition Decision

A.1—Program Decision on recognition of the program.

In this section indicates the final decision, taken from the Reviewer Worksheet, Section G. Standards will either be “Met” or “Not Met.”

A.2—Test Results

The information on the 80% pass rate can be taken from the Cover Sheet in the Program Report. There is a place to add comments if appropriate.

A.3—Summary of Strengths

It is important that to cite strengths of the program. Strengths could be either specific aspects of the program (e.g. diversity of clinical sites) or more global statements (e.g. a major focus on teaching in urban settings), but should not be just a reiteration of the sections of the program standards that were approved.

Part B—Status of Meeting Program Standards

In this section cite each individual standard as Met or Not Met. If a standard is found Not Met, a comment should explain why it is not met. The comment should provide enough information for the program to be able to understand the issue. Some guidelines for writing the comments:

- Use objective, impartial language
- Be complete so no other information is needed to understand why standard is “not met.”
- Explanation must be related only to the standard
- Be as clear and specific as possible
- Use direct language without being harsh or unprofessional
- Don’t use modifiers that appear tentative or uncertain
- Cite weaknesses if these have not already been addressed
- Be careful about including specific instructions for remediation (e.g. the faculty should develop a new course). Any “suggestions” from the reviewers will be taken as “commands” by the faculty. It is not the reviewers’ role to prescribe programmatic changes, but to provide explanation for why particular standards were not met.

Part C—Evaluation of Program Report Evidence

In Part C reviewers are asked to evaluate how well the program’s assessments and candidate data address content knowledge, pedagogical and professional content knowledge skills and dispositions, and candidate impact on student learning. The information in Part C summarizes the program report evaluation in a way that can be extremely useful.

Part D—Evaluation of the Use of Assessment Results.

In Part D, reviewers should provide an evaluation of the information submitted in Section V of the Program Report. Questions for consideration might include:

- Is it clear that assessment evidence is used by the institution in evaluating the program, counseling candidates, and revising courses or other elements of the program?
- Has the institution made program changes based on assessment evidence?
- Do you find the faculty interpretations consistent with the evidence provided in the program report?
- Are the implications for programs that appear in this section of the program report derived from the interpretations?

Part E—Additional Comments

Part E provides the reviewer with the opportunity to make any additional comments that are appropriate.

Appendix B

Checklist of Pre-visit Agenda Items

30-60 days before on-site review

- (1) Confirm the accuracy of information.
- (2) Determine the status of the Self-Study Report.
- (3) Discuss status of the program reviews.
- (4) Identify the number of team members.
- (5) Confirm the dates and review the tentative schedule of activities.
- (6) Identify administrators, faculty, staff, and other groups that will be interviewed.
- (7) Review expectations for the visit, as well as the meals throughout the visit.
- (8) Identify when the Self-Study Report will be sent and what support documents, including directions to hotel and campus, will be forwarded to the team.
- (9) Discuss the organization of the work rooms, personal computers, hours of availability, and refreshments.
- (10) Discuss the hotel accommodations, including the workroom, personal computers, meals, refreshments, and travel reimbursement.
- (11) Discuss transportation to and from campus.
- (12) Discuss the support personnel who will be available, including technical support for equipment in hotel and campus work rooms.

Appendix C

Accreditation Review Timeline

1. SDDOE notifies institution two years prior to the review
2. Institution notifies SDDOE of dates and options
3. SDDOE provides institutional orientation technical assistance for writing of reports prior to review, if requested
4. SDDOE selects team members for on-site review approximately one year prior to review
5. Institution submits program reports to SDDOE 6-12 months prior to review
6. SDDOE consultant may conduct pre-visit with institution, 30-60 days prior to review
7. Program review will be completed 2-3 months prior to on-site review
8. Institution will be notified before the on-site review of any program deficiencies.
9. Institution submits the Self-Study report 1-2 months prior to the on-site review.
10. On-site review is conducted.
11. State consultant forwards an electronic draft report to reviewers following the on-site visit. The reviewers should submit comments to SDDOE within five days.
12. Upon completion of educator preparation provider review and no longer than 30 days after the completion of the on-site review, the institution will receive the program report from SDDOE. The institution will then have 30 days to rejoin and indicate and factual corrections to be made.
13. SDDOE consultant recommends approval status to South Dakota Board of Education Standards.
14. Program approval letter is forwarded to institution within 30 days of state board approval.

Appendix D
Sample Schedule for State Review Team On-Site Visit
The times below are only a suggested guideline.

First Day (Sunday)

10:00 am – 12:00 noon	Team meeting
12:00 noon – 12:45 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Orientation, Team Work Session, Interviews
6:30 pm – 7:30 pm	Dinner/Reception
7:30 pm – 10:00 pm	Team work session at hotel

Second Day (Monday)

7:30 am – 8:00 am	Breakfast (location determined by institution)
8:00 am – 12:00 noon	Campus <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue review of documents and interviews• Identify additional documents needed• School visitations (optional)
12:00 noon – 1:00 pm	Lunch on campus
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Continue review of documents and interviews
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	Dinner (location determined by institution)
7:00 pm – 10:00 pm	Team meeting at hotel

Third Day (Tuesday)

7:30 am – 8:00 am	Breakfast (location determined by institution)
8:00 am – 12:00 noon	Team meets in hotel work room
12:00 noon – 12:45 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm	Exit interview on campus