DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION (IHE)

PROTOCOL FOR THE REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PROGRAMS OF STUDY LEADING TO EDUCATOR LICENSURE IN ARKANSAS

September 2025

PROTOCOL FOR THE REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF IHE-BASED PROGRAMS OF STUDY LEADING TO EDUCATOR LICENSURE IN ARKANSAS

The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) approval is required for any IHE before implementing a new program of study that prepares candidates for any professional educator license in Arkansas or revising an existing approved program for licensure. The review process described herein ensures that programs fulfill state licensure requirements. The DESE oversees the program review and approval process at the state level. (Ark. Code Ann. §6-11-105, §6-17-422, and §6-17-402) The Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB) must approve any professional education program at Arkansas public universities (Ark. Code Ann. §6-61-208) or at postsecondary institutions certified to operate in Arkansas (Ark. Code Ann. §6-61-301). The DESE Rules Governing Educator Licensure and the DESE Rules Governing Educator Support and Development should also be considered to ensure that candidates within programs comply before submitting their licensure application.

Programs will be required to submit a Higher Education Act (HEA) Title II Report, submit data to the DESE, and submit data to the Educational Testing Service (ETS). The HEA Title II Report is a national data collection of institutions and states related to teacher preparation and licensure. HEA https://title2.ed.gov/Public/Home.aspx.

Data submitted to HEA Title II

- Program requirements
- Enrollment and completer numbers
- EPP candidates' and completers' race and gender data
- Program field experiences/clinical practice information
- Faculty data
- Technology information
- Goals regarding addressing shortage areas

Data submitted to the DESE

- Partnership and shortage area information
- Enrollment and completer data for programs not included in HEA Title II reporting
- Candidates and experienced mentor teachers are assigned during a one-year supervised residency

Data submitted to ETS for Title II Pass Rate reporting:

- Candidate-level data on enrollees
    - Enrollment status

- Name (first, last)
- DOB and/or SSN
- Licensure code

This data will be a part of the Arkansas State Review of Educator Preparation Programs. The organization and focus of the overarching framework for the review comprise three core standards, each with aligned indicators and criteria. The AR State Review Standards are:

- Candidate Recruitment & Completion
- Preparing Candidates Effectively
- Meeting Workforce Needs

State EPP Review

Approved educator preparation programs shall undergo a regular state review process to determine if they are meeting continuous improvement indicators that align with Arkansas's education workforce needs.

The State Review shall, at a minimum, include:

- Annual data reports on educator preparation providers
- An audit every three years to verify compliance with the Right to Read Act
- On-site reviews are conducted by teams consisting of peer reviewers, content, and pedagogical specialists, and are scheduled every 6 years

The EPP will be required to report to the DESE the data necessary to maintain a database of minority completers who are eligible for Arkansas Educator Licensure (Ark. Code Ann. §6-61-124). The database is shared with school districts to support their recruitment efforts.

If this is a new program operating as a new provider, no data will be reviewed until October of the following year for Educator Preparation Program Reports.

Approved out-of-state programs are required to cover all costs for any in-person site visits.

(NOTE: Institutions of higher education that offer programs leading to educator licensure in Arkansas shall be accredited by a national or regional accrediting agency that is recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE) or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). Before program implementation, public institutions of higher education in Arkansas and any out-of-state institutions of higher education offering programs (including programs with online coursework) to students in Arkansas shall be approved by the AHECB to offer certificate and degree programs leading to educator licensure in Arkansas.)

Section I. New Educator Licensure Program

1. An IHE seeking to offer a new program of study to prepare candidates for first-time educator licensure in Arkansas submits a letter of intent (LOI) to offer a new program.
    a. If the new program leads to the creation of a credential or degree, an Arkansas public university or other IHE certified under Arkansas Code Ann. §6-61-301 submits an LOI for new programs to the ADHE. The ADHE forwards this form to the DESE to serve as documentation of intent to offer the program.
    b. All other IHEs submit an LOI for new programs directly to the DESE.
    c. Dates for submission of LOI for new programs:
        - December 1 for a program to be implemented in the following fall semester.
        - June 1 for a program to be implemented in the following spring semester.
        - October 1 for a program to be implemented the following summer term.
2. New programs for first-time licensure and new endorsement programs submit a Program Proposal for New Programs.
    a. If the new program leads to the creation of a certificate or degree, an Arkansas public university or other IHE certified under Arkansas Code Ann §6-61-301 submits the Program Proposal for New Programs to the ADHE. The Program Proposal for New Programs will be forwarded to the DESE.
    b. All other IHEs submit the Program Proposal for New Programs directly to the DESE.
    c. Dates for submission of the Program Proposal for New Programs:
        - February 1 for a program to be implemented in the following fall semester.
        - July 1 for a program to be implemented in the following spring semester.
        - December 1 for a program to be implemented in the following summer term.
3. The DESE program advisor completes an initial review of the proposal and requests any additional information or clarification that would be helpful during the review.
4. If the proposal is for a new first-time licensure program, the DESE program advisor convenes and facilitates the work of a program proposal review panel to review the program of study. A panel may be required for a new endorsement program.
    a. The panel is comprised of members from Arkansas's public and independent higher education institutions with similar state-approved programs, a content specialist, and/or a P-12 educator in the content or specialty area.
    b. A representative from the ADHE may serve on the panel as an ex officio member.
    c. Panel Procedures:
        - The panel completes an initial review and may request additional information, clarification, or revisions.
        - The DESE program advisor corresponds with the panel and the IHE to ensure the panel has all the necessary information to make a

recommendation for approval or denial.

- The timeline for the review process is dependent on the availability and scheduling of reviewers and the time needed for institutions to respond to the panel comments and/or requests for additional or clarifying information.

5. The DESE program advisor conducts an internal review of the proposal if a panel review is not required.

6. A decision is made as to the approval or denial of the proposed program.
    a. If the DESE determines that the proposed program does not meet the necessary standards and requirements and does not approve the proposed program, written notification of the denial is sent to the IHE and ADHE.
    b. If the DESE determines that the proposed program meets all necessary standards and requirements and grants initial program approval, the IHE, DESE, and ADHE personnel are sent written notification.

7. During the initial approval period, the program is authorized to admit students; implement assessments; collect, aggregate, and utilize data for program improvement; and recommend program completers to the DESE for a license.

Section II: Revisions to Existing Educator Licensure or Endorsement Programs

A. Conditions Requiring DESE Approval of Revisions to Existing Educator Licensure Programs

1. New or revised licensure or program requirements from the DESE.

2. Revisions from IHE

    a. Changes to the program of study meeting the competencies required for licensure (ATS, TESS/LEADS, Educator Competencies)
    b. Changes that lead to a different grade range of licensure being awarded
    c. Changes in the program's delivery structure
    d. Changes to course numbers, titles, or credits
    e. Changes to the entry or exit requirements of the program
    f. Expansion of programs to other sites (Does not apply to individual courses)

B. Procedure for Approving Program Revisions

1. An IHE seeking to revise an approved program of study for educator licensure submits the Program Proposal for Revised Programs.

    a. Arkansas public universities or other IHEs certified under Arkansas Code Ann §6-61-301 submit proposals that require a change to the degree/certificate program title, CIP code, or the number of hours to the ADHE. The proposal is forwarded to the DESE.
    b. All other proposals are submitted directly to the DESE.

2. The DESE reviews the proposed revisions and supporting documentation submitted by the IHE. A panel review is usually not required. Additional or clarifying information may be requested.

3. The DESE program advisor will work with the IHE to establish a timeline for revision.

DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

Appendix I

Professional Education Program Proposal

C O V E R S H E ET

Institution:_____Date Submitted: _____

Program Contact Person: _____

Position/Title:_____

Phone:_____Email: _____

Name of program:_____CIP Code: _____

Degree or award level (B.S., M.A.T., graduate non-degree, etc.): _____

Indicate the title and grade range of the license for which candidates will be prepared:

Title:_____Grade Range: _____

Proposal is for:

____New First-Time Licensure Program (Complete Section A)

____New Educator Licensure Endorsement Program (Complete Section B)

____Revision(s) to Approved Licensure Program (Complete Section C)

____Deletion of Approved Licensure Program (Complete Section D)

Indicate the portion of the proposed program to be delivered via Distance Learning Technology (online):_____%

Proposed program starting date: _____

Will this program be offered at more than one site? □Yes □No

If yes, list the sites where the program will be offered:

Prior approval by AHECB is required for Arkansas public institutions and institutions certified under Ark. Code Ann. §6-61-301 to offer programs at off-campus sites.

A. New Program for First-Time Licensure (Traditional and Alternative)

Proposals for new programs should be prepared with each section identified, appropriately labeled, and paginated. Proposals should be submitted electronically and include the following components:

1. Cover Sheet *(Use the front page from this guide or the fillable form coversheet from the website, which contains basic information about the proposed program.)*

2. **Table of Contents**

3. **Needs Summary**

    a. Provide a brief statement of the program's purpose, mission, and/or goals.
    b. Explain the need for the program with supporting documentation, such as data from supply and demand studies, institutional surveys, feedback from school districts, or requests from individuals.
    c. Provide estimates of the number of candidates expected to enter and complete the proposed program each year for five years.

4. **Institutional Approval**

    a. Briefly describe the institution's educator preparation program approval process.
    b. Provide official documentation, including signatures, showing approval was granted by all appropriate authorizing entities. If approval has not been granted, indicate when approval is expected.

5. **Program Description**

    a. Provide a general description of the program.

    b. Provide a program of study. If the program is embedded in a baccalaureate degree, including an eight-semester degree plan. Include the number of hours required to complete the program.

    c. Explain if the program will accept experience credit in place of coursework. Include the process to approve experience, the maximum number of credits accepted, and the cost to candidates.

    d. Describe the delivery and support system (e.g., face-to-face, online, blended). (*Note: HLC policy requires an institution to seek HLC's prior approval if the institution plans to initiate or expand its distance education offerings. When initiation or expansion is anticipated beyond the terms of its current HLC stipulation, an institution must submit a substantive change request to HLC.)*

    e. Provide a curriculum matrix that shows course alignment with the current corresponding Arkansas Educator Competencies for the content area or category of licensure (Not applicable for alternative educator preparation programs except alternative preparation programs leading to Special Education P-12 or Early Childhood/Special Education Integrated B-K licensure).

f. Provide an Arkansas Teaching Standards Matrix documenting how the Arkansas Teaching Standards are covered in the program of study.

g. Provide a Teacher Excellence and Support System (TESS) matrix documenting how the Competencies for TESS are covered in the program of study.

h. Explain the training process for preparing candidates to use and align curriculum materials to the Arkansas K-12 Academic Standards for their licensure area.

i. Describe how candidates are trained to select and utilize High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM). Provide an HQIM alignment matrix documenting how the HQIM competencies are covered in the program of study.

j. Explain the training process for preparing candidates to address Artificial Intelligence (AI) in their professional practice and in establishing policies for their students. Provide the AI policy for your institution.

k. Programs in Guidance/Counseling that lead to a first-time standard license should provide a matrix showing alignment to the components of TESS for School Counselor Framework in place of the TESS for Classroom Teachers Framework.

l. Provide documentation that the program includes a curriculum that addresses requirements established by Arkansas statutes governing educator preparation and the DESE Rules Governing Educator Licensure, including, without limitation, instruction in:

    - The Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators
      (Preservice teachers are held to the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators. For preservice teachers to receive a Provisional License, documentation of the successful completion of the professional educator ethics training identified by rules of the state board must be provided (under Act 294 of 2017)
        - Provide a framework based on the Ethical Competencies for Arkansas Educators that shows how the competencies are embedded throughout the program of study - Sample Framework. A clean framework is provided here.
    - Mandated reporting obligations, under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-61-133
    - Family and Community Engagement, under Ark. Code Ann.§6-15-1705
    - Mental Health Awareness and Teen Suicide Prevention, under Ark. Code Ann. §6- 17-708
    - Information on the identification of students at risk for dyslexia and related disorders, under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-41-609

- Human trafficking awareness §6-17-710
- Arkansas History: Proposals for K-6, middle school social studies, and secondary social studies must include three (3) college credit hours at an accredited institution of higher education. If the proposal is for an alternative educator preparation program, an approved learning pathway in Arkansas History through ArkansasIDEAS. All other licensure areas must complete two (2) hours of Arkansas History through ArkansasIDEAS. §6-17-703
- Science of Reading (SOR) instruction, under Act 416 of 2017 and 1063 of 2017
- Educator Preparation Programs leading to Elementary Education K-6 and Special Education K-12 should submit syllabi/module descriptions showing objective alignment to the Foundations of Reading Competencies-Proficiency Level. The connection between the objective and competency should occur in the syllabus/module description itself.
- Programs leading to licensure areas other than Elementary Education K-6 or Special Education K-12 submit a document that shows courses/modules aligned to the Foundations of Reading Competencies-Awareness Level.

  (Note: DESE-approved prescribed pathways for awareness are aligned to the awareness level competencies.)

m. Provide syllabi, which include course descriptions, for all professional education courses prescribed in the program and for content courses listed on the submitted curriculum matrix.
   i. Syllabi should include objectives that align with ATS, the appropriate TESS framework, and Educator Competencies.
   ii. Syllabi should include a description of methods/assessments used to determine if a candidate has successfully met the learning objectives.

n. First-time licensure must provide the method used to ensure candidates demonstrate pedagogical competence.

o. Describe competencies expected of program candidates regarding their knowledge and use of educational technology. (Competencies should reflect the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Standards for Educators).

p. Common Assessments

   i. Describe assessments that are common among the provider's educator preparation programs
   ii. Indicate the relative places within the program where the assessments occur, including state licensure assessments
   iii. Provide samples of any common assessments other than state licensure assessments and their scoring rubrics.

iv. Describe how TESS is used for the evaluation of candidates during the program.
v. If TESS is not used, provide detailed information on the system of support, development, appraisal of teacher performance, and verification used
vi. Explain how data from the assessments will be collected and used for continuous improvement

q. Field Experience/Supervised Clinical Practice

i. Explain how the program engages candidates in substantial, quality participation in field experiences (such as observations and practicums) and supervised clinical practice (such as student teaching and internships), in the applicable licensure level and content area. Candidates in First-time licensure programs must include a clinical internship of no less than one university semester or equivalent, including:

- The amount of time (e.g., clock hours, weeks, etc.) that candidates are expected to participate in each of the experiences.
- Settings in which the experiences will be accomplished, and the procedures by which candidates are placed in these settings
- Settings must adhere to the requirements outlined in the current DESE Rules Governing Educator Licensure
- Description of the qualifications for clinical educators responsible for supervising candidates
- Verification of training in the system of support, development, and appraisal of teacher performance (e.g., TESS)
- Explanation of how candidates will be provided with a combination of field experiences and supervised clinical practice across the entire grade level of the license being sought

(Beginning 2024 -2025, all programs must utilize the Aspiring Teacher Rubric based on TESS for evaluating the effectiveness of the candidate during their supervised clinical practice.)

6. **Program Partnerships and One-Year Supervised Residency**

Candidates completing first-time licensure programs in May 2027 and thereafter must have completed a one-year supervised residency alongside an experienced mentor teacher in a school setting.

- Include a plan for implementing a one-year supervised residency that details the timeline and proposed 8-semester degree plan, and ensures the minimum requirements are met:

General Requirements for Traditional Programs:

- For a candidate to enter a school setting for their clinical placement, each candidate must have completed all required background checks.
- Candidates must have at least ninety hours of course credit before the start of semester one of the residency.
- A one-year supervised residency shall include a one-year clinical placement for a minimum of 3 days (18 hours) per week in the first semester and 4 days (24 hours) per week in the second semester. Programs may also use a semester equivalent (270 hours in the first semester and 360 hours in the second semester) for licensure areas that do not follow a traditional weekly schedule. The residency must span two consecutive semesters; Fall to Spring or Spring to Fall.
- A one-year supervised residency shall take place in a public-school classroom, including public charter classrooms or an accredited private school classroom.

Specific Requirements of the Traditional Educator Preparation Program: Refer to the Arkansas Novice Teacher Mentoring Manual for requirements.

i. Explain the process of assigning each candidate a clinical supervisor from the institution. The clinical supervisor should be up to date with all training, including DESE-recognized coaching and Aspiring Teacher Rubric Training. This training can be done within your educator preparation program or attended through a DESE-approved training. The clinical supervisor supports, coaches, and trains the candidates through, but not limited to, the following:

   a. How will the clinical supervisor conduct observations, performance assessments, and walkthroughs? Include the number and method for these.

   b. How will the clinical supervisor share information with residents, apprentices, mentors, and school district partners?

ii. Explain how the program will ensure the district assigns one experienced mentor teacher who supports no more than two total pre-service or in-service educators. Experienced mentors exclude practicing administrators and supervisors. Describe the following:

   a. The written and mutually agreed upon process for mentor

selection between the EPP and the district.

b. How mentors are trained to support, evaluate, and coach the candidate.

iii. Describe how EPPs and K-12 districts meet to review program data, discuss the implementation of the candidate's clinical experience, and plan for the future needs of the K-12 district partner. At least two meetings per semester for your top two placement districts.

iv. Include a copy of any Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) between the EPP and the P-12 district where teacher residents are placed. Include the following components within your MOU.

- Goals of partnership
- Responsibilities of the district
- Responsibilities of the EPP
- Joint responsibilities
- Timelines/Schedules for walk-throughs, meetings, and other communications

(MOUs must be updated and on file with the divisions for all teachers working under an Aspiring Teacher permit during their one-year supervised residency.)

v. In addition to the requirements above, a candidate working as a Teacher of Record during a traditional internship within a requesting school district shall follow the requirements below:

a. For a candidate to enter a school setting for their clinical placement, each candidate must have completed all required background checks.

b. Candidates must have an approved Aspiring Teacher Permit on file with DESE, have met all first-time licensure requirements as referenced in 3-1.03.1 of the Licensure Rules, and received passing scores on all content area assessments required (including the stand-alone reading assessment for elementary education K-6 and special education K-12)

c. Candidates must have at least ninety hours of course credit before the start of semester one of using the Aspiring Teacher Permit. During the one-year supervised residency, candidates may have a maximum of 15 credit hours for each semester of use of the Aspiring Teacher permit.

d. The Aspiring teacher permit experience shall take place in a public-school classroom, including public charter classrooms, with an experienced mentor teacher assigned by the district.

General Requirements for Alternative Licensure Programs:

- For a candidate to enter a school setting for their clinical placement, each candidate must have completed all required background checks.
- Candidates must have a bachelor's degree or higher and be eligible for a provisional license before starting the first semester of the one-year supervised residency if working as a teacher of record.
- An alternative preparation with a culminating internship shall include a one-year clinical placement for a minimum of 3 days (18 hours) per week in the first semester and 4 days (24 hours) per week in the second semester. Programs may also use a semester equivalent (270 hours in the first semester and 360 hours in the second semester) for licensure areas that do not follow a traditional weekly schedule. The residency must span two consecutive semesters; Fall to Spring or Spring to Fall.
- A one-year supervised residency shall take place in a public school classroom, including public charter classrooms or an accredited private school classroom.

Specific Requirements of the Alternative Educator Preparation Program: Refer to the Arkansas Novice Teacher Mentoring Manual for requirements.

vi. Explain the process for assigning each candidate a clinical supervisor from the institution. The clinical supervisor should be up to date with all training related to coaching, candidate evaluation, and candidate clinical experience. These pieces of training can be done within your educator preparation program or attended through DESE-approved training. The clinical supervisor supports, coaches, and trains the candidates through, but not limited to, the following:

    a. How will the clinical supervisor conduct observations, performance assessments, and walkthroughs? Include the number and method for these.
    b. How will the clinical supervisor share information with residents, mentors, and school district partners?

vii. Explain the process for ensuring that the EPP will ensure the district assigns one experienced mentor teacher who supports no more than two total pre-service or in-service educators. The experienced mentor teacher must be assigned once the candidate is working under a provisional license. Experienced mentors exclude practicing administrators and supervisors.

Detail the following:

a. The written and mutually agreed upon process for mentor selection between the EPP and the district.
b. How mentors are trained to support, evaluate, and coach the candidate.
c. Explain the process for EPPs and K-12 districts meeting to review program data, discuss the implementation of the candidate's clinical experience, and plan for the future needs of the K-12 district partner.
d. Include a copy of any Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) between the EPP and the K-12 district where teacher residents are placed. Include the following components within your MOU.

i. Goals of partnership
ii. Responsibilities of the district
iii. Responsibilities of the EPP
iv. Joint responsibilities
v. Timelines/Schedules for walk-throughs, meetings, and other communications

viii. Include a copy of the One-Year Residency Handbook for the program.

7. **Admission Requirements**

a. Indicate requirements for admission into the program, such as admissions assessment, GPA, disposition assessments, letters of recommendation, demonstration of English proficiency, prerequisite coursework, and any other program requirements.
b. Provide a summary of the admission procedures, such as application submission, curriculum plan submission, or teacher education committee interview.
c. Indicate at what point a student will be officially admitted as a candidate in the educator preparation program.
d. Indicate at what point a candidate is considered a participant in supervised clinical practice.

8. **Retention Procedures**

a. Describe any mid-program benchmarks or transition points for evaluating candidates in the program. At least one mid-program benchmark is required.
b. Candidates enrolled in an Alternative Preparation Program in Fall 2024 and thereafter shall not take more than 6 hours of coursework unless they are eligible

for a provisional license. Describe how the program will support the candidate in meeting the requirements for the provisional. Candidates who are ineligible for a provisional license due to lack of employment or a bachelor's degree may take more than 6 hours if they are enrolled in a program that is approved for content competency.

c. Describe any intervention strategies, such as advising, mentoring, or tutoring, used to assist candidates who struggle to succeed in the program. The program is expected to have more than one strategy for assisting candidates.
d. Describe the procedures for placing candidates on probation, including how districts/schools are informed when a candidate is placed on probation during the teaching component of the program.
e. Describe the procedures for dismissing candidates from the program, including how districts/schools are informed when a candidate is dismissed during the teaching component of the program.

9. **Exit Requirements**

Define requirements for each of the following:

- When a candidate is considered enrolled in the program
- When a candidate is considered a program completer
- When a candidate is eligible for graduation
- When a licensure officer recommends a candidate for Arkansas licensure

v. Candidate Follow-Up Procedures

Describe the program's plan for obtaining and reporting data from program graduates.

10. **Faculty**

a. Provide a roster of all professional education faculty who teach or supervise candidates in the program, including adjunct faculty. The roster should indicate their highest degrees, professional experience, most recent teaching and/or supervision assignments, teacher certification and licenses held, current or past, PreK-12 teaching experience, level of Science of Reading training, and course assignment(s). For clinical educators, verify training in the system of support, development, and appraisal of teacher performance (e.g., TESS, Aspiring Teacher Rubric) used. Do not include general studies or content faculty.
b. Provide a listing of faculty who will be teaching courses via distance learning technology and indicate the courses and online teaching experience for each instructor.
c. Explain how the program will ensure all professional education faculty have a deep knowledge of Arkansas K12 Academic Standards, HQIM, Science of Reading, content knowledge, and content pedagogy.

11. **Institutional Resources Dedicated to Program Support**

    a. Describe the available human, fiscal, or physical resources available to support the program.
    b. Identify the availability of any specific or special needs that are essential to the program, such as science laboratories, special equipment, or specific technology.
    c. If any courses or academic support services are provided by other institutions or organizations, include a copy of the signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outlines the responsibilities of each party and the effective dates of the agreement.

12. **Implementation Plan**

    a. Explain the implementation of the program. If a current program is being phased out to be replaced with the proposed new program, then indicate how students in the current program will be accommodated.

B. New Program for Licensure Endorsement

Proposals for licensure endorsement programs should be prepared with each section clearly identified, appropriately labeled, and paginated. Proposals should be submitted electronically and include the following components:

1. Cover Sheet *(Use the front page from this guide or the fillable form coversheet from the website, which contains basic information about the proposed program.)*

2. **Table of Contents**

3. **Needs Summary**

   a. Provide a brief statement of the program's purpose.
   b. Explain the need for the program and provide supporting data, such as data from supply and demand studies, institutional surveys, or requests from individuals.

4. **Institutional Approval**

   a. Briefly describe the institution's educator preparation program approval process.
   b. Provide official documentation, including signatures showing approval was granted by all appropriate authorizing entities outlined above. If approval has not been granted, indicate when approval is expected.

5. **Program Description**

   a. Provide a general description of the program.

   b. Provide a copy of the program of study, including the number of hours required.

   c. Describe the delivery and support system (e.g., face-to-face, online, blended).

   d. Provide a curriculum matrix that shows course alignment with the current corresponding Arkansas Educator Competencies for the content area or category of licensure.

      (Programs leading to K-6 or 7-12 Special Education Resource licensure should provide a SPED 101 Academy syllabus that shows objective alignment with the SPED 101 Academy competencies. The connection between objective and competency should occur on the syllabus itself.)

   e. Science of Reading (SOR) instruction, under Act 416 of 2017 and Act 1063 of 2017

(Programs should present evidence of alignment to the Foundations of Reading Competencies-Awareness Level or how they ensure candidates have previously completed the appropriate pathway. ***Note: DESE-approved prescribed pathways for awareness are aligned to the awareness level competencies.)***

f. An educational leadership program that leads to an administrator's license should provide documentation outlining how the LEADS Framework is used in the program of study.

g. If a program leads to licensure in one of the specialty areas listed below, provide a TESS for Specialty Areas matrix documenting how the appropriate TESS for Specialty Areas Framework is covered in the program of study.

- Gifted and Talented K-12
- Instructional Facilitator K-12
- Reading Specialist K-12
- Library Media Specialist K-12
- Guidance/Counseling K-12

h. Explain the training process for preparing to use and align curriculum materials to the Arkansas K-12 Academic Standards for their licensure area, while including evidence-based strategies and inclusive practices.

i. Describe how candidates are trained to select and utilize High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM). Provide an HQIM alignment matrix documenting how the HQIM competencies are covered in the program of study.

j. Explain the training process for preparing candidates to address artificial intelligence in their professional practice and in establishing policies for their students. Provide the AI policy for your institution.

k. Provide syllabi, which include course descriptions, for all professional education courses prescribed in the program and for content courses listed on the submitted curriculum matrix.

- Syllabi should include objectives that align with the appropriate TESS/LEADS framework and Educator Competencies.
- Syllabi should include a description of methods/assessments used to determine if a candidate has successfully met the learning objectives.

l. Common Assessments

- Describe assessments that are common among the provider's educator preparation programs.
- Indicate the relative places within the program where the assessments occur, including state licensure assessments.

- Provide samples of any common assessments other than state licensure assessments and their scoring rubrics.
- Describe how TESS is used for the evaluation of candidates during the program. If TESS is not used, provide detailed information on the system of support, development, and appraisal of teacher performance and verification used.
- Explain how data from the assessments will be collected and used for continuous improvement.

m. Describe how the program engages candidates in substantial, quality participation in field experiences (such as observations and practicums) and, if the competencies are required, supervised clinical practice (such as student teaching and internships), in the applicable licensure level and content area.

- Include a description of the qualifications for clinical educators responsible for supervising candidates
- An educational leadership preparation program that leads to an administrator's license should include methods for ensuring clinical educators are LEADS trained
- An educational leadership preparation program that leads to an administrator's license should require internship experience that includes site-based and in-person interaction among school supervisors, program faculty, and candidates

6. <u>Program Partnerships</u>

Describe formal and informal partnerships with entities external to the EPP where candidates fulfill field experiences/supervised clinical practice requirements.

1. Include the length of the relationship, how it is formed, how it is structured, and the roles and responsibilities of the EPP and each partner
2. Include documentation that these partnerships are operational and on how they operate, including evidence of mutually agreed upon expectations for candidate entry, activities, and exit
3. Include evidence that the program is preparing educators to meet the needs of Arkansas schools
4. Include documentation that partners collaborate to select, prepare, evaluate, support, and retain clinical educators who can serve as models of effective practice and have the skills to supervise candidates

7. <u>Admission Requirements</u>

Indicate requirements for admission into the program, such as admissions assessment, GPA, disposition assessments, letters of recommendation, demonstration of English proficiency, prerequisite coursework, and any other program requirements.

a. Provide a summary of the admission procedures, such as application submission, curriculum plan submission, or teacher education committee interview.
b. An educational leadership program that leads to an administrator's license should provide the following:

i. A description of the method for interviewing as an admission requirement.

ii A description of how candidates will show evidence of teacher effectiveness before admission. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Verification from the applicant's superintendent that the applicant is performing at the level of an Effective Teacher, or an equivalent measure, if the applicant is not employed by an Arkansas public school
- Portfolio showing evidence of ability to raise student achievement
- National Board-Certified Teacher (NBCT)
- A micro-credential that demonstrates teacher effectiveness

iii. A description of how candidates will show evidence of leadership abilities before admission. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Graduation from a DESE-recognized or approved teacher leader academy, institute, or program
- Portfolio showing evidence of adult leadership activities
- Micro-credential in an identified area of leadership
- Performance assessment

8. **<u>Retention Procedures</u>**

Describe any intervention strategies, such as advising, mentoring, or tutoring, used to assist candidates who struggle to succeed in the program.

9. **<u>Exit Requirements</u>**

Define requirements for each of the following:

i When a licensure officer recommends a candidate for Arkansas licensure
ii When a candidate is considered a program completer
iii When a candidate is eligible for graduation (if applicable)

10. **<u>Candidate Follow-Up Procedures</u>**

Describe the program's plan for obtaining and reporting data from program graduates.

11. **Faculty**

a. Provide a roster of program faculty that includes their highest degrees, course assignment(s) in the proposed program, and professional experience. For clinical educators, provide verification training in the appropriate system of support, development, and appraisal of educator performance (e.g., TESS for Specialty Areas; LEADS). List all professional education faculty, including adjunct faculty, who teach or supervise candidates in the program. Do not include general studies faculty.

b. Provide a listing of faculty who will be teaching courses via distance learning technology and indicate the courses and online teaching experience for each instructor.

c. An educational leadership program that leads to an administrator's license should provide evidence of how site-based, in-person interaction with faculty will be achieved to an adequate extent.

- Include the number of candidates assigned to be a clinical educator during the internship

- Include evidence that candidates can interact with program faculty during coursework consistently

12. **Institutional Resources Dedicated to Program Support**

a. Describe the human, fiscal, or physical resources available to support the program.

b. Identify the availability of any specific or special needs that are essential to the program, such as science laboratories, special equipment, or specific technology.

C. Revisions to an Existing Program

Proposals for revising existing programs should be prepared with each section clearly identified, appropriately labeled, and paginated. Proposals should be submitted electronically and include the following components and any additional documentation to meet the 2024 program requirements:

1. Cover Sheet *(Use the front page of this guide or the fillable form coversheet from the website, which contains basic information about the proposed program.)*

2. **Rationale**

Explain the reason for this and describe the proposed revision(s).

3. **Institutional Approval** *(Only required for major revisions)*

a. Briefly describe the institution's educator preparation program approval process.

b. Provide official documentation, including signatures showing approval, that was granted by all appropriate authorizing entities outlined in 3.a. If approval has not been granted, indicate when approval is expected.

4. **Documentation of Revisions**

a. Changes to Curriculum

i Provide a copy of the current program of study, indicating the proposed revisions. If the program is embedded in a baccalaureate degree, include the number of hours required to complete the program.

ii Provide a revised curriculum matrix that shows course alignment with the **current** corresponding Arkansas Educator Competencies for the content area or category of licensure, if applicable.

iii Provide a revised Arkansas Teaching Standards matrix for first-time licensure programs documenting how the Arkansas Teaching Standards are covered in the program of study.

iv Provide documentation outlining how the appropriate TESS or LEADS standards (TESS for classroom teachers, TESS for Specialty Areas, or LEADS) are used in the program of study, if applicable.

v Provide a framework based on the Ethical Competencies for Arkansas Educators that shows how the competencies are embedded throughout the program of study - Sample Framework. A clean framework is provided here.

vi Describe how candidates are trained to select and utilize High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM). Provide an HQIM alignment matrix documenting how the HQIM competencies are covered in the program of study.

vii Explain the training process for preparing candidates to address Artificial Intelligence (AI) in their professional practice and in establishing policies for their students. Provide the AI policy for your institution.

viii Provide syllabi that include course descriptions for all *new or revised professional education courses* prescribed in the revised program and for *new or revised content courses listed on the submitted curriculum matrix*. Syllabi should include objectives that align with the Arkansas Teaching Standards, TESS/LEADS framework, and Educator Competencies, as well as a description of assessments. Also, provide *any syllabi not submitted to DESE since 2021*. (See **note below for specifics for particular programs)

ix Indicate any changes to common assessments throughout the program. Provide samples and scoring rubrics for any new or revised common assessments.

x Describe any revisions to the field experiences (such as observations, practicums) and supervised clinical practice (student teaching, internships) required for candidates in the

program. Include revisions to add a One-Year Supervised Residency by 2027 as outlined in **Section A, subsection 6.**

**Note:

- Alternative educator preparation programs leading to Special Education K-12 licensure or endorsement programs leading to K-6 or 7-12 Special Education Resource licensure should provide a SPED 101 Academy syllabus that shows objective alignment with the SPED 101 Academy competencies. The connection between objective and competency should occur on the syllabus itself.
- Alternative educator preparation programs leading to Elementary Education K-6 and Special Education K-12 licensure should submit syllabi/module descriptions showing objective alignment to the Foundations of Reading Competencies-Proficiency Level. The connection between the objective and competency should occur in the syllabus/module description itself
- Programs leading to licensure areas other than Elementary Education K-6 or Special Education K-12 should present evidence of alignment to the Foundations of Reading Competencies-Awareness Level or how they ensure candidates have previously completed the appropriate pathway. DESE-approved prescribed pathways for awareness are aligned to the awareness level competencies**.**

5. **Transition to DLT Format**

   i Submit a rationale for the transition.
   ii Submit a current program of study identifying the courses in the program that will be delivered totally or partially via distance learning technology.
   iii Describe the methods for instructor-to-student and student-to-student interaction in the distance learning courses/modules, including synchronous (e.g., videoconferencing and chat) and asynchronous (e.g., email and discussion boards) methods.
   iv. Describe the assessment processes used in the courses to determine students' achievement of intended outcomes.
   v. Submit syllabi for DLT courses that reflect the revised methods for interaction and assessment processes.

   (Note: HLC policy requires an institution to seek HLC's prior approval if the institution plans to initiate or expand its distance education offerings. When initiation or expansion is anticipated beyond the terms of its current HLC stipulation, an institution must submit a substantive change request to HLC.)

6. **Changes to Policies Overseeing Candidate Quality**

   i Describe any changes to entry requirements, including the process and/or when students are officially considered a candidate in the educator preparation program.
   ii Describe any changes to retention procedures, such as mid-program benchmarks or transition points.
   iii Describe any changes to exit requirements, including the definitions of the following:
   - When a candidate is considered enrolled in the program
   - When a candidate is considered a program completer
   - When a candidate is eligible for graduation
   - When a licensure officer recommends a candidate for Arkansas licensure

7. **Transition Plan**

   If the revision creates new or additional requirements for current program candidates, indicate how they will be accommodated in the revised program.

D. Deletion of an Existing Program

Proposals for program deletion should be prepared with each section clearly identified, appropriately labeled, and paginated. Proposals should be submitted electronically and include the following components:

a. Cover Sheet *(Use the front page of this guide or the fillable form coversheet from the website, which contains basic information about the proposed program.)*

b. Rationale: Explain the reason for the proposed deletion.

c. Institutional Approval
   i. Briefly describe the institution's educator preparation program deletion process.
   ii. Provide official documentation, including signatures, showing approval of the deletion being granted by all appropriate authorizing entities. If approval has not been granted, indicate when approval is expected.

d. Transition Plan

   i. If applicable, explain how candidates currently enrolled in the program will be accommodated.

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

"Accreditation" means the official recognition granted to the institution of higher learning, educator preparation provider, or program of study that meets the standards of quality established by the accrediting agency.

"Alternative Educator Preparation Program" means a program of study approved by the DESE for candidates who have a bachelor's degree and are preparing for licensure as teachers and leaders in public schools in this state.

"Apprentice" means a candidate participating in the Arkansas Teacher Residency Apprenticeship Program that is approved by the US Department of Labor.

"ArkansasIDEAS" means Internet Delivered Education for Arkansas Schools, a partnership between the Division and the Arkansas Educational Television Network (AETN) to provide through the AETN access to high-quality, online professional development for Arkansas licensed educators.

"Artificial Intelligence (AI)" means computer-based systems that simulate human intelligence to support teaching, learning, assessment, and program improvement within an educator preparation provider (EPP). Examples include AI-assisted instructional tools, adaptive learning platforms, automated data analysis, and other applications that enhance candidate preparation and program effectiveness.

"Aspiring Teacher Permit" means a credential issued by the Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) that allows candidates in traditional undergraduate educator preparation programs to teach in Arkansas schools while completing program requirements under supervision. The permit is time-limited and valid only for the candidate's approved content area and grade level.

"Asynchronous" describes a teaching method in which online learning resources are used to facilitate information sharing outside the constraints of time and place among a network of people.

"ATS" means Arkansas Teaching Standards.

"Benchmark" means a description or example of candidate performance that serves as a standard of comparison for evaluation or judging quality.

"Candidate" means an individual who has been admitted into an educator licensure program.

"Clinical Educators" means all educator preparation providers (EPP) and school-based individuals, including classroom teachers, administrators, and instructional support personnel, who assess, support, and develop a candidate's knowledge, skills, or professional dispositions at some stage in the clinical experiences.

"Clinical Supervisor" means an educator preparation provider (EPP) personnel member who is formally assigned to a candidate or group of candidates during the residency portion of clinical experiences. The Clinical Supervisor is responsible for candidate oversight, evaluation, and documentation of progress. Clinical Supervisors provide coaching, support, and feedback, and collaborate with Mentor Teachers and site coordinators to ensure candidates meet established competencies and residency expectations.

"Distance learning technology" means electronic or digital learning media, including the Internet, e-mail, television, and other audio-visual communication devices used to deliver instruction where the teacher and the students are in separate physical settings.

"Educator Preparation Program Completer" means a person who has completed all coursework/modules and program requirements of a state-approved program of study.

"Ethical Competencies" means the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that enable educators to act with integrity, uphold the Code of Ethics, and protect the well-being of students, particularly as demonstrated during residency and clinical practice.

"Experienced Mentor Teacher" means a classroom teacher with a minimum of three years of successful teaching experience who holds a current Effective Teacher summative evaluation and has completed DESE-recognized coaching training. Mentor Teachers are selected based on demonstrated instructional expertise, professional dispositions, and the ability to foster the growth of teacher candidates. A Lead or Master Educator designation is preferred.

"Field experiences" means the activities for candidates in educator preparation programs that allow early and ongoing practice opportunities to apply content and pedagogical knowledge. These include observations, tutoring, assisting teachers and administrators, and practicums.

"GPA" means grade point average based on a 4.0 scale.

"Gradual Release" means an instructional approach in which responsibility for learning shifts from teacher modeling to guided practice and, ultimately, to independent student performance.

"High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM)" means curriculum and instructional resources that are standards-aligned, research-based, content-rich, and designed to support all learners in mastering grade-level expectations.

"LEADS" means Leader Excellence and Support System, a statewide system for observation and support of K-12 administrators.

"Licensure Officer" means a designee at an approved educator preparation program who signs and verifies that licensure applicants have completed the approved program and all requirements for licensure.

"Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)" means a formal written agreement between an educator preparation provider (EPP) and a partner school or district that outlines the terms, roles, and responsibilities of each party in supporting teacher candidate preparation and clinical experiences.

“One-Year Supervised Residency” means a year-long clinical experience in which a teacher candidate is placed in a partner school and assumes increasing instructional responsibilities under the supervision of a qualified Mentor Teacher and an EPP Clinical Supervisor.

“Preservice teacher” means an unlicensed person who is enrolled as a student in an educator preparation program approved by the DESE.

“Program Partnership” means a formal collaboration between an educator preparation provider (EPP) and a partner school or district to support candidate preparation and clinical experiences.

“Residency Handbook” means the official document developed and maintained by an educator preparation provider (EPP) that outlines the policies, procedures, roles, responsibilities, and expectations for all participants in the residency experience.

“Rubrics” means criteria that indicate levels of quality or performance.

“Supervised clinical practice” means pre-service teaching or internship in a school setting that provides candidates with extensive opportunities to develop and demonstrate competence in the professional roles for which they are preparing, completed under the guidance and supervision of licensed practicing school personnel and college or university supervisory personnel. This includes internships and student teaching.

“Synchronous” means a distance learning technology venue in which instruction is delivered and received simultaneously.

“Teacher of Record” means the educator who is assigned the lead responsibility for a student’s learning in a subject or course and who is responsible for evaluating and reporting that student’s progress.

“TESS” means Teacher Excellence and Support System, a statewide system for observation and support of K-12 Classroom and Specialty Teachers.

“Traditional Educator Preparation Program” means an undergraduate program of study offered by an educator preparation provider (EPP) that leads to a candidate’s first teaching license.

“Transition point” means a key point in a program when candidates are assessed for their knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions to determine if they are ready to proceed to the next stage in the program.

One-Year Supervised Residency Rubric

Area For Review	Exceeds	Meets	Approaching	Below
Clinical Supervisor	● Clinical supervisors are not only up to date with all training including DESE-recognized coaching and Aspiring Teacher Rubric, but they can aid in the process of training new and continuing experienced mentor teachers. ● Evidence of supervisor feedback to candidates demonstrates an understanding of coaching practices and their ability to aid candidates in reflective practice regarding their teaching. ● The clinical supervisor conducts a minimum of 8 observations, assessments, and performance walk-throughs. ● The clinical supervisor has experience teaching at the grade level or subject matter of the teaching assignment	● Clinical supervisors are up to date with all training, including DESE-recognized coaching and Aspiring Teacher Rubric Training. ● Evidence of supervisor feedback to candidates demonstrates an understanding of coaching practices and their ability to aid candidates in reflective practice regarding their teaching. ● The clinical supervisor conducts a minimum of 6 observations, assessments, and performance walk-throughs.	● Clinical supervisors are up to date with all training, including DESE-recognized coaching and Aspiring Teacher Rubric Training. ● The clinical supervisor conducts a minimum of 4 observations, performance assessments, and walk-throughs	● Clinical supervisors are not up to date with all training, including DESE-recognized coaching and Aspiring Teacher Rubric Training ● The clinical supervisor does not conduct a minimum of 4 observations, performance assessments, and walk-throughs

Area For Review	Exceeds	Meets	Approaching	Below
Experienced Mentor Teacher	• The mentor teacher has a Lead or Master Professional Educator designation as well as DESE-recognized coaching training • The mentor teacher is assigned no more than one teaching candidate • The mentor teacher has at least three years of teaching experience • The process for selecting a mentor teacher is provided. • Practicing administrators and supervisors are excluded from the experienced mentor pool. • Evidence has been provided that mentor teachers are trained to support, evaluate, and coach the candidate. • The mentor teacher has time set aside within the school day for formative feedback for the teaching candidate	• The mentor teacher has a preferred status, Lead or Master Professional Educator designation, as well as DESE-recognized coaching training • The mentor teacher is assigned no more than two teaching candidates • The mentor teacher has at least three years of teaching experience • The process for selecting a mentor who supports no more than two total pre-service or in-service educators are provided. • Practicing administrators and supervisors are excluded from the experienced mentor pool (except as approved). • Evidence has been provided that mentor teachers are trained to support, evaluate, and coach the candidate.	• The process for selecting a mentor teacher who supports no more than two total pre-service or in-service educators is provided. • Practicing administrators and supervisors are excluded from the experienced mentor pool (except as approved). • Evidence has been provided that mentor teachers are trained to support, evaluate, and coach the candidate.	• Mentor teachers do not show a preferred status of Lead or Master Professional designation • Mentor teachers do not show evidence of DESE-recognized coaching training • Mentor teachers are assigned more than two teaching candidates, and/or the mentor is a practicing administrator with significant non-classroom duties

Area For Review	Exceeds	Meets	Approaching	Below
Time Requirements	5 days per week for each semester, with remaining coursework provided online	Minimum of 3 days (18 hours) per week in the first semester and 4 days (24 hours) per week in the second semester, OR The program utilizes a semester equivalent of 270 hours in the first semester and 360 hours in the second semester. The residency must span two consecutive semesters; Fall to Spring or Spring to Fall.	The program provides the number of necessary hours, but does not delineate the hours or days per semester	The program does not provide the state-required minimum

Area For Review	Exceeds	Meets	Approaching	Below
Residency Handbook	The handbook includes the following: ● Process of assigning the clinical supervisor ● How observations, performance assessments, and classroom walk-throughs are conducted ● How the clinical supervisor shares information ● Process of assigning mentor teachers who meet DESE qualifications ● Training requirements for mentor teachers and the process for their assignment ● Description of required assessments The handbook presents steps for candidate licensure The handbook is provided to all partners (candidates, supervisors, mentors, and school partners) at least one month before the residency The handbook is provided in electronic format with live links to relevant information and a numbered table of contents for easy accessibility	The handbook includes the following: ● Process of assigning the clinical supervisor ● How observations, performance assessments, and classroom walk-throughs are conducted ● How the clinical supervisor shares information ● Process of assigning mentor teachers who meet DESE qualifications ● Training requirements for mentor teachers and the process for their assignment	The handbook indicates that processes for assigning clinical supervisors and mentor teachers are used, but does not delineate those processes	The handbook does not include a discussion of relevant processes

Area For Review	Exceeds	Meets	Approaching	Below
Quality of the Clinical Experience	• Candidates are allowed through gradual release to take on all responsibilities associated with teaching. • Candidates can plan to utilize HQIM and lesson internalization. • Candidates can implement HQIM and have been trained in its usage through High-Quality Professional Development. • Candidates administer assessments designed for HQIM and analyze assessment data to inform their instructional practice. • Candidates are provided with supervised clinical practice across the entire grade level for licensure	• Candidates are allowed through gradual release to take on all responsibilities associated with teaching. • Candidates have access to HQIM for planning purposes. • Candidates implement HQIM. • Candidates administer assessments designed for use with HQIM. • Candidates are provided with supervised clinical practice across the entire grade level for licensure	• Candidates are allowed to take on most of the responsibilities associated with teaching. • Candidates are familiar with HQIM; however, the placement is not well-versed in aiding the candidate with planning or implementation. • Candidates assess student learning.	• Candidates are allowed to take on very few, if any, of the responsibilities associated with teaching, or candidates are given an inordinate amount of classroom responsibility without proper training and guidance

Area For Review	Exceeds	Meets	Approaching	Below
Quality of the EPP and K-12 Program Partnership	The EPP and the K-12 partner district have mutually agreed upon policies in place to ensure: ● Open, respectful communication ● Time for intentional evaluation of data ● Willingness to implement innovative approaches to meet the evolving needs of the broader educational landscape The EPP and the K-12 partner district have developed an MOU that includes: ● Shared vision with clear objectives ● A commitment to high standards ● Clearly defined roles of all stakeholders ● Accountability measures ● Applicable timelines ● Guarantee of allocation of adequate resources	The EPP and the K-12 partner district have developed an MOU that includes: ● Shared vision with clear objectives ● A commitment to high standards ● Clearly defined roles of all stakeholders ● Accountability measures ● Applicable timelines ● Guarantee of allocation of adequate resources .	The EPP and the K-12 partner district have developed an MOU to establish a partnership, but the MOU lacks specifics to ensure a quality experience for all stakeholders.	The EPP and the K-12 partner have not established an MOU.