



2015-2016 General Assembly

# HOUSE BILL 97: 2015 Appropriations Act, Sec. 8.41: Modify Educator Preparation Program Approval Process

**Committee:**  
**Introduced by:**  
**Analysis of:** Sec. 8.41 of S.L. 2015-241

**Date:**  
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Staff Attorney

**SUMMARY:** *Sec. 8.41 of S.L. 2015-241, as amended by Sec. 3.7 of S.L. 2015-268, reorganizes and recodifies all of the statutes related to educator preparation programs (EPPs). This section clarifies that all EPPs in the State must meet State approval standards or be nationally accredited in order for their graduates to be eligible for initial licensure. In addition, the section requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to include the following components for State EPP approval:*

- *Adoption of rules for granting State approval to EPPs that mirror national accreditation in order to maintain the same level of quality across programs.*
- *A State peer review process that includes highly qualified and trained members to review EPPs across the State.*
- *Technical assistance to EPPs in order to:*
  - *Improve education quality and educator preparation program performance.*
  - *Inform programs about the approval process as a part of EPP performance based on outcome data.*
  - *Assist with State and federal reporting processes.*
  - *Assist with building and maintaining partnerships between schools and EPPs.*

*The SBE may place an approved EPP provider on probationary status and require a plan for improvement on any unmet standards. The SBE may revoke program approval for reasons including: failure to report required information to the SBE; offering misleading or false information about approved EPPs; accepting students into EPPs that have not been approved; failing to comply with the EPP review process; and failing to meet standards for approval.*

*This section requires that State approved EPPs cannot admit an undergraduate student into the program unless the student has earned a minimum cumulative grade point average of at least 2.7. Approved EPPs must ensure that the minimum cohort grade point average for each entering cohort to an EPP is least a 3.0.*

*Finally, this section requires that the SBE adopt rules for EPPs that require at least the following:*

- *Establishment and maintenance of collaborative formalized partnerships with elementary and secondary schools that are focused on student achievement, continuous school improvement, and the professional development of elementary and secondary educators, as well as those preparing educators.*

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- ***Memorandums of understanding with local school administrative units (LEAs) where students are placed that:***
  - *Define the collaborative relationship between the EPP and the LEA and how this partnership will focus on continuous school improvement and student achievement.*
  - *Adopt a plan for collaborative teacher selection, orientation, and student placement.*
  - *Determine how information will be shared and verified between the EPP and the LEA.*
- ***Clinical educators who supervise students in residencies or internships must meet the following requirements:***
  - *Be professionally licensed in the field of licensure sought by the student.*
  - *Have a minimum of three years of experience in a teaching role.*
  - *Have been rated, through formal evaluations, at least at the "accomplished" level as part of the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation System and have met expectations as part of student growth in the field of licensure sought by the student.*
- ***In all programs leading to initial licensure, field experiences must include organized and sequenced engagement of students in settings that provide them with opportunities to observe, practice, and demonstrate knowledge and skills. The experiences must be systematically designed and sequenced to increase the complexity and levels of engagement with which students apply, reflect upon, and expand their knowledge and skills.***
- ***Clinical practice must be required in the form of residencies or internships in those fields for which they are approved by the SBE. These residencies or internships must be a minimum of 16 weeks. Residencies and internships may be over the course of two semesters and must, to the extent practicable, provide student experiences at both the beginning and ending of the school year.***
- ***EPPs with a clinical practice component must require, in addition to a content assessment, a nationally normed and valid pedagogy assessment to determine clinical practice performance. Passing scores and mastery criteria must be determined by the SBE.***

***This section became effective July 1, 2015. EPPs approved by the SBE on or before July 1, 2015, must meet the new standards established by the SBE no later than July 1, 2017. EPPs seeking approval by the SBE after July 1, 2015, must meet the new standards at the time the approval is sought. The SBE may not require students enrolled in EPPs that require a nationally normed and valid pedagogy assessment to determine clinical practice performance to provide scores for a pedagogy assessment based on multiple choice or constructed responses.***