

Professional Educator Program Approval Major Review Handbook

February 2017



**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

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PROGRAM REVIEW GLOSSARY

Action Plan – A plan developed by a Program Provider and submitted to PDE that must address problematic areas identified in a program review, along with a timeline for implementing the improvements.

Advisement Sheet – A document used to guide candidates through their certification program semester by semester, listing all necessary coursework and other certification requirements, and tracking candidates' progress on these requirements.

Annual Report – Under PA Title 22, Chapter 354.22, providers must submit program evaluation data to PDE each year. The data collection tool is distributed by the Bureau of School Leadership and Teacher Quality.

Alternative Provider – A certification preparation program provider that is not a PA college or university. All programs offered by alternative providers in PA are post-baccalaureate programs. In PA alternative certification program providers include Intermediate Units, Local Education Agencies (LEAs), and other entities.

At Risk or Low Performing – Under the Federal Title II ACT of 1998 and reauthorized in 2008, states are required to report annually on the quality of teacher preparation programs in their state and make that information widely available to the general public by posting the findings on the State's website. Under the Title II regulations, all States are required to implement a system to assess the quality of each of their teacher preparation programs.

Candidate – An individual who is formally enrolled in an undergraduate program, post-baccalaureate program, or advanced degree program leading to certification.

[Chapter 4 Regulation](#) – PA Code Title 22, Chapter 4, addresses the Academic Standards and Assessment in education.

[Chapter 49 Regulation](#) – PA Code Title 22, Chapter 49, addresses the Certification of Professional Personnel in education.

[Chapter 354 Regulation](#) – PA Code Title 22, Chapter 354, addresses the Preparation of Professional Educators.

Educational Technology – The use of computers, the internet, distance learning technologies, and other emerging technologies as applied to instruction, assessment and professional productivity. Preparation programs must show evidence that faculty are knowledgeable, are practicing, and have training in and access to current practices related to the use of computers and technology, including education-related electronic information, the Internet, video resources, computer hardware, software, distance learning technologies and related educational technologies and resources, and are able to integrate these practices into their teaching and scholarship. Additionally, programs shall ensure that candidates have the opportunity to develop similar knowledge and skills. ([Chapter 354 Regulations Web Page](#))

Enrolled Candidates – Candidates who have been formally admitted into a preparation program and who have not yet completed the program.

[Entry into Certification Programs Guidelines](#) – The PDE requirements a candidate must meet before a candidate is formally enrolled in a certification preparation program.

Field Experience – Activities that provide candidates with opportunities for practical application of theoretical constructs and concepts developed in coursework, under the supervision and direction of college faculty, prior to student teaching, internship or clinical experiences. The activities include: observing, tutoring, mini-teaching, lesson planning and evaluating student performance, and may take place in public or nonpublic schools or community organizations. ([Guidelines to Student Teaching and Field Experience](#))

First Time Content Area Assessment Average – The average percent passing scores of first time content test takers.

[Framework Guidelines](#) – A set of guidelines that explain the framework of programs approved by PDE.

[Higher Education Act \(HEA\) Title II Report](#) – An annual report to the federal government required by Title II of the *Higher Education Act (HEA)*, as amended in 2008, that calls for accountability for programs that prepare teachers. Reports are required from each institution of higher education (IHE) that conducts a traditional teacher preparation program or an alternative route to state certification or licensure program and that enrolls students receiving federal assistance under *HEA* (e.g., Title IV).

IHE – Institution of Higher Education.

Initial Certification – The first teaching certificate issued to an individual.

Intern Certification Program – A post-baccalaureate professional certificate that entitles the holder (Intern) to fill a full-time teaching position while completing a certification preparation program. Interns must hold an undergraduate degree and pass the subject matter test(s) prior to obtaining employment.

LEA – Local Education Agency, such as a school district or a charter school.

Letter of Program Closure – When a Program Provider decides to close or discontinue a professional educator program, the program must notify both PDE and the candidates at least five semesters before the closing date. Because this decision may have adverse consequences for the candidates, the institution is responsible for facilitating the completion of the candidate's program. When closing a program, the institution may choose to either:

1. teach out the remaining program for current candidates and not enroll new students, or
2. collaborate with other institutions in the area in accepting course, transferring credits and completing other required activities that candidates may need for certification.

The program must provide a letter of intent to close the program, written on official letterhead that includes the names and PPIIDs of candidates currently in the program to

their respective liaison. To once again offer the program, the provider is required to submit an initial application to the Division of Professional Education and Teacher Quality.

Liaison – Division of Professional Education and Teacher Quality staff member assigned to a provider as a point of contact with PDE regarding professional educator preparation and program approval.

Major Review – A comprehensive review of a provider's approved certification programs to document and evaluate the level of program compliance with all PDE Framework Guidelines and regulations.

Program Matrix – A matrix is typically a spreadsheet that aligns the required competencies with the program's courses. A matrix lists all PDE required competencies within courses that are part of the professional core. Electives and General Education courses should not be included. The matrix is a tool used to identify the competencies embedded in a given course syllabus and across the program.

On-site Review Team – A subset of reviewers selected to visit the campus that includes individuals who possess the knowledge and skills necessary to adequately review the evidence required by the established focus goals.

PDE – Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Post-baccalaureate Program – A certification program that requires an earned baccalaureate degree. A Post-baccalaureate program may lead to certification only or to an advanced degree.

PPID – Professional Personal Identification Number, required to access the Teacher Certification Information System (TIMS) to retrieve certification records or complete a new certification application.

Professional Core – A well planned sequence of professional educator courses and field experiences to develop an understanding of the structure, skills, core concepts, methods of inquiry and application of technology related to each academic discipline. The Professional Core includes:

- A. Organizational School Structure
- B. Child and/or Adolescent Development
- C. Subject Matter Content and Pedagogy
- D. Assessment
- E. Professionalism
- F. Adaptations and Accommodations for Diverse Students in an Inclusive Setting, and
- G. Meeting the Needs of English Language Learners

Program Completer – A certification program candidate who meets all of the requirements in a PDE-approved certification preparation program.

Program Provider – An entity approved by PDE to offer educator preparation programs.

Program Reviewer – An individual from basic or higher education trained in program review by PDE. The program reviewer examines applications using a review rubric

based on current regulations and framework guidelines.

Program Status Letter – A letter sent to program providers by the Bureau of School Leadership and Teacher Quality (BSLTQ) informing them of their approval status.

Regional Accreditation – [Regional and national institutional accrediting agencies](#) are recognized by the Secretary as reliable authorities concerning the quality of education or training offered by the institutions of higher education or higher education programs they accredit.

STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

STEAM – Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics.

Student Teaching – Sequential and developmental experiences under the supervision of college personnel and cooperating teachers who are well trained in the content area. ([Student Teaching Competencies](#))

MAJOR REVIEW OVERVIEW

The overarching purpose of the Major Review is to provide all stakeholders in the Commonwealth with assurance of program quality and professional educator competency. The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) works in concert with each program provider in a collaborative partnership to document and evaluate the level of program compliance with all regulations. PDE evaluates each program provider in a seven year cycle as mandated by 22 Pa. Code § 49.13(d). These guidelines apply exclusively to the Major Program Review.

Educator certification program providers are required to complete a major review Application (excel spreadsheet) for all of their approved programs at both the undergraduate and post-baccalaureate levels. The [Major Review Template](#) can be found on Institutional Program Approval web page.

The Major Program Review requires outcomes data and impacts on student growth and development as articulated by program competencies. Outcomes are broadly conceived as those performances of pre-service and early in-service program candidates. For example, the program provider designs the program of study that is aligned with competencies set forth by PDE's Program Framework Guidelines. Candidates engage in courses, field experiences and culminating clinical experiences. From these varied experiences, they are required to demonstrate competency as gauged by faculty designed assessments. These critical competency-based assessments attest to the candidates' performance in each program. They allow for assessment of the individual, and the aggregate of these results speak to the quality of program. The data collected is quantifiable and, when examined in the self-study, should lead the program provider to identification of areas of strength and areas for improvement.

This description of the program review process serves to highlight sources of outcomes-based evidence that are generated, reviewed and analyzed by the program provider and reviewed by PDE, and finally should lead to program improvement decisions. These activities all serve as elements in a feedback mechanism to examine individual candidate growth, as well as the overall health and vitality of the program under review.

SUBMISSION CONTENT FOR MAJOR PROGRAM REVIEW

The Department recognizes the diverse providers in the Commonwealth charged with preparing professional educators and views this diversity as strength. Within that diversity, all program providers are required to provide multiple sources of evidence that adequately capture the quality of programs offered. Each program provider will provide evidence through inputs, outcomes and impacts designed to inform program quality and result in continuous improvement. Evidence is expected to document program growth and performance of candidates on specific program competencies, as well as impacts on student growth and achievement in Pre-K - 12 classrooms for pre-service and in-service candidates. Program providers are also expected to provide evidence of meaningful collaboration with internal and external stakeholders.

Program providers must submit an application for all of their approved programs at both the undergraduate and post-baccalaureate levels to receive continuous approval. In order to maintain approval, the provider must submit an application for programs that are not currently active, not enrolling candidates or with no completers. It is highly recommended that providers consider closing inactive programs prior to the review submission date by sending a letter of program closure to their liaison. Programs that have been officially closed must re-apply to regain PDE approval. This applies to all of the instructional, endorsement, program specialist, supervisory and administrative programs.

All [major review training materials](#) are available on the PDE web page for all program providers. Providers should read the Major Review Handbook and then view the training videos and documents on the website before beginning the application. The PDE liaisons are also available to offer technical assistance and support.

APPLICATION TABS

The application is divided into six tabs that run along the bottom of the screen. The tabs are labeled:

- Instructions,
- General Information,
- Program Information,
- Courses,
- Faculty, and
- Review Rubric.

Each will be explained in this handbook. Please take a few minutes and preview them before beginning to input information into the application.

Instructions Tab

The instructions section provides useful information to help providers successfully submit an application. When questions arise, refer back to this tab for further direction. The tab includes instructions on:

- how to embed documents into the narrative cells;
- file naming conventions when uploading a word, PDF or excel file into the narrative cell; and

- helpful hints on the information to be included in the program information tab.

General Information Tab

It is within this section that the program demographics are described. Many of the cells use drop down boxes which help standardize the institution, certificate type, program level and delivery method naming conventions used by the department.

The first grouping of cells includes the institution name, AUN and institution number. Once you select your institution name, the other two cells will prepopulate. These are additional identifiers used internally that are needed to identify your institution as a PDE-recognized certification provider.

The second cluster of cells collects information on the certification program, level and credential offered by the provider. The program is selected from a drop down box. The level to be selected is either undergraduate or post-baccalaureate. **Please note:** a separate application must be completed for both an undergraduate and post-baccalaureate program in the same subject area. All programs must select a credential from the drop-down. Post-baccalaureate programs must indicate if the program culminates in an advanced degree or if it is for certification only.

The third data cell cluster asks for information on the type of program offered. Each of the five cells includes a drop down box that requires the provider to select the response that best describes your program offering:

- Traditional Classroom Program: yes or no.
- Distance Education: yes or no.
- Hybrid Traditional + Distance: yes or no.
- Intern Program: yes or no.
- Residency: yes or no. (**Please note:** PDE has not approved any residency programs to date.)

The final cluster of cells asks for the contact person, telephone number and email address from the program provider who will be the contact the liaisons will communicate with about the application. For tracking and organizing purposes, PDE allows one contact per application. The designated contact can then share the application with other program provider faculty and staff.

Program Information Tab

It is in within this section that the provider will enter the majority of the data needed to complete the application. The tab is divided into ten steps which will be discussed in further detail below under the Program Information, Application Steps section.

Courses Tab

It is within this section that providers will input detailed information about the program courses that include the required competencies found in the Framework Guidelines. The tab will be discussed in further detail below under the Program Information, Course Catalog section.

Faculty Tab

It is within this section that providers will enter detailed information on the faculty assigned to teach the competencies found in the Framework Guidelines. The tab will be discussed in further detail below under the Program Information, Faculty section.

Review Rubric Tab

The review rubric section is used by the program reviewer to provide their feedback on the information provided by the program using a rubric created by PDE. The rubric is divided into steps which are discussed in detail below in the Program Information, Application Steps section. Program providers are encouraged to read the rubric criteria for each step prior to entering data.

The reviewer is asked to look at one data point or a cluster of data points to determine if the information provided **Does Meet Requirements** or **Does Not Meet Requirements** based on the rubric statements. Regardless of the assessment, the reviewer will, under the **“Finding”** cell, provide the evidence they used to make their assessment. If an assessment of Does Not Meet Requirements is given, the reviewer is required to provide in the **Recommendation** cell, feedback on how the program can move to Does Meet Requirements.

The reviewer may make an assessment of Meets Requirements and add comments within the Recommendation cell that the provider may want to consider as they continue to modify their program design.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Application Steps

The application is divided into 10 key steps. Each step will require quantitative and qualitative responses to multiple data points as required by Chapters 354 and 49 of the PA School Code. The Excel tool allows for the ability to embed documents or hotlinks as evidence in response to the questions. The ten steps included in the application are as follows:

Step 1	Accreditation
Step 2	Mission and Philosophy
Step 3	Program Evaluation
Step 4	Admission Criteria
Step 5	Program Design Information
Step 6	Course Catalog
Step 7	Field Education
Step 8	Student Teaching
Step 9	Exit Criteria
Step 10	Faculty

Step 1: Accreditation

The program provider will report and provide a copy of the official letter of accreditation of any national accreditations held by the program such as:

- a. Middle States Commission on Higher Education;
- b. Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation;
- c. National Association for the Education of Young Children, and
- d. American School Counselor Association.

National accreditation is not a requirement for certification approval in Pennsylvania.

A listing of [Regional and National Institutional Accrediting Agencies](#) can be found on the U.S. Department of Education website.

Step 2: Mission and Philosophy

The program providers will provide a mission statement for each program submitted per 22 Pa Code Chapter 354 (Conceptual Framework). The provider will also provide an analysis of how the mission drives program design changes.

Step 3: Program Evaluation

Step 3 is divided into four discrete sections:

- Candidate Data
- LEA Data
- Course Evaluation
- At Risk or Low Performing Programs

Candidate Data

In this section, the provider will supply seven years' worth of numerical data that captures the following:

- The number of enrollees eligible for formal enrollment into the program;
- The number of program completers eligible to apply for Pennsylvania certification;
- The number of program completers who received Pennsylvania certification.

Data and a narrative analysis will be required for the following:

- The number of candidates exiting the program before completing the program requirements and comments on the causes of why candidates exit.
- The first-time content area assessment average passing scores per year and a document that breaks down the module pass rates (for tests with modular designs) uploaded in the narrative column.

Local Education Agency Data

The data in this section will be collected in a narrative form. The provider will describe the processes and tools used in collecting feedback from the LEA on its candidates.

The feedback to be collected from the LEA and analyzed includes:

- The quality of candidates placed in the LEA for their field experiences;
- The collaboration between the LEA and program faculty and how it is used to improve the program;

- The quality of candidates placed in the LEA for their student teaching/internship.

At Risk or Low Performing Programs

Under the Federal Title II ACT of 1998 and reauthorized in 2008, states are required to report annually on the quality of teacher preparation programs in their state and make that information widely available to the general public by posting the findings on the State's website. Under the Title II regulations, all States are required to implement a system to assess the quality of each of their teacher preparation programs.

PDE will notify all programs of their designation. If your program is given a designation of at risk or low-performing, you would respond yes to data point 3.14 in the application itself and provide the required information in 3.14a.

Step 4: Admissions Criteria

Numerical data is collected on the number of credits required for formal admission into the undergraduate program. **Note:** As per the [Entry into Certification Programs Guidelines](#), the candidate can earn between 48-60 undergraduate credits before formal entry into the preparation program.

Post-baccalaureate candidates must hold an earned degree prior to program entry. They are exempt from the credit requirement and guidelines mentioned above.

The provider must upload a link to its admissions criteria from its website. Narrative responses are required for the description of the program's recruitment plan and how it facilitates student transfers into the certification program.

Step 5: Program Design

Step 5 is divided into five discrete sections:

- Program Completion and Credit Requirements
- Advisement and Program Matrix
- Educational Technology
- Candidate Advisement, and
- Career Planning and Other College Services.

Program Completion and Credit Requirements

Programs will provide the number of credits for the Professional Core.

Advisement Sheet and Program Matrix

Providers will upload the advisement sheet(s) used to guide candidates through their certification program semester by semester.

Providers will upload a Program Matrix that demonstrates where all PDE-required competencies are addressed and assessed within all courses in the Professional Core.

Educational Technology

Educational technology plays a vital role in the state's STEAM initiative. As such, PDE requires programs include multiple types of educational technology (ies) in the program

as well as:

- Provide evidence that the program effectively prepares candidates to integrate technology into their curriculum, planning and teaching to differentiate instruction.
- Describe how program candidates use technology to collect, manage and analyze data to improve their teaching.

Candidate Advisement

The provider is reporting on how the program monitors and advises candidates as they complete the certification program. Data is collected on the number of candidates that are assigned to one faculty advisor and how often the advisor meets with the candidates.

The provider will upload information on how the advisor monitors the progress of the candidate as they matriculate through the program. Examples of documents used to provide clear and specific program expectations must be uploaded into the narrative cell.

Career Planning and Other College Services

The program will provide numerical data on its retention rate over the past seven years as well as the number of candidates who were counseled out of the program. An analysis must be provided on the reasons for transfer/withdraw and how it impacts the program.

The provider will provide information on the types of career planning services available to their candidates and the percentage of candidates that take advantage of the service(s) offered.

Undergraduate candidates must take and pass the basic skills test prior to program entry and a subject matter content test(s) to become certified. The program will describe the services provided to students to help them successfully pass the basic skills and the subject matter test(s). Post-Baccalaureate candidates are not required to take the basic skills tests; however, they must successfully pass the subject matter test(s).

As required by §49.16 (22 Pa. Code), the preparing institution shall provide, "...ongoing support for novice educators in partnership with local education agencies during their induction period, including observation, consultation and assessment." (22 Pa. Code §49.14(4) (ix)). The provider will describe the support offered to its graduates for two years following program completion.

Step 6: Course Catalog

The course catalog can be accessed from a tab that runs along the bottom of the application spreadsheet. For each programmatic course that contains any required PDE competency found in the Framework Guidelines, the following information must be entered into the application:

- Course Number
- Course Title
- Course Description
- Credit Hours
- Distance Learning Delivery if Applicable

- Course syllabus in a PDF format.

Step 7: Field Education:

The data required is broken down into Stages 1&2 and Stage 3/Practicum field experience.

Stages 1&2 Exploration & Observation

The provider will describe the method by which it evaluates the effectiveness of the candidate's exploration and observation experiences and provide a copy of the evaluation tool.

Post-baccalaureate programs are not required to complete the Stages 1&2 experiences. N/A should be placed in the narrative cell.

Stage 3 Pre-Student Teaching:

The provider will describe the method by which it evaluates the effectiveness of the candidate's field experience and provide a copy of the evaluation tool. The program will report the number of Stage 3 field experiences hours required in the program as well as the number of times the candidate is visited in the field by the course instructor/field supervisor.

Step 8: Student Teaching

The data in this step refers to the Stage 4 Student Teaching/Internship experience. Providers are tasked with providing numerical, descriptive and analytical responses to the data points within the step. The information gathered in this section is used to determine if the student teaching experience meets the regulations and framework guidelines while providing meaningful feedback to the program's faculty and administration.

The provider is asked to supply numerical information in this step on:

- The number of weeks of Student teaching/Internship and
- The types of placement sites used for the experience, i.e. rural, suburban, etc.

Narratives or embedded documents will be uploaded to report on activities and regulation requirements including numerical data and descriptive narratives on the following data points:

- How often student teachers/interns meet with their program provider supervisor;
- The frequency of meetings that occur between the student teacher/intern with their program's field supervisor;
- The frequency of meetings that occur between the cooperating teacher and the program's field supervisor; and
- How often student teachers/interns are evaluated by the program's supervisor.

Providers will provide descriptive and evidence based- documentation that addresses the following:

- The collaboration activities that take place between the placement site and the program provider about the student teaching experience.

- The orientation candidates receive prior to entering their placement site
- The training provided by the provider to the cooperating teachers assigned to their candidates; and
- A description of how outcomes of the collaboration meetings between the cooperating teacher and the program provider field site supervisor are used to enhance the candidate's experiences.

Providers will analyze the data collected above to respond to the following data points:

- Describe how student teachers/interns impact student achievement in their classrooms; and
- Upload examples of the assessments and rubrics used to analyze the effectiveness of the certification program based on student teaching data.

Step 9: Exit Criteria

It is in this step that the provider will discuss how program exit criteria is conveyed to and located for the candidates. A narrative and/or an embedded document can be uploaded into the cell.

An analysis of the program's quality and success is required in this step. Using the factors below relative to each other, the provider will use the collected information will as the evidence needed to make decisions about program modifications. The program factors to consider when assessing program quality and success must include but are not limited to include:

- content area testing pass rates;
- course evaluation data;
- student teaching evaluation data;
- final GPA; and
- any other applicable factors the provider wishes to add.

Step 10: Faculty Information

This step collects information on program and course faculty at both the individual and program level.

Faculty Summary

This subsection requires targeted information on faculty such as:

- diversity;
- professional education and development;
- proficiency in educational technology;
- teaching assignment;
- evaluation;
- collaboration, and
- input into the program's design.

A brief synopsis of the program's efforts to recruit, hire and retain a diverse faculty must be provided. Although recruiting and retaining a diverse faculty may be a challenge, regulations require providers have a formal and active plan to diversify faculty. There are four data points that address the professional development of program faculty.

Information is collected on:

- the types of activities faculty members engage in as part of the professional education community;
- the number of hours devoted by the program for faculty professional development;
- whether professional development is mandatory or voluntary for program faculty per provider policy, and
- how the program supports and provides professional development to the faculty.

As mentioned in Step 5, educational technology plays a vital role in the state's STEAM initiative. As such, PDE requires programs include multiple types of educational technology (ies) in the program delivery and candidate competencies. Three data points in this step ask programs to provide narratives on:

- the educational technology(ies) the program expects faculty to be proficient in;
- how the programs ensures the faculty is proficiency, and
- the evidence utilized by the program to affirm faculty members integrate technology into their" curriculum, planning and teaching.

The major review requires the provider to describe their standards and procedures to confirm their faculty is qualified for their teaching assignments. Along with providing information on faculty qualifications, the provider is asked to describe the process used to evaluate program faculty. A copy of the blank tool must be uploaded in the narrative cell. Do not include any completed evaluation forms in the application.

The two remaining data points in the faculty summary section ask about collaboration activities. The provider must describe the collaboration activities that occur between the Education and Arts & Sciences faculties as the majority of candidates will take courses taught by both departments during their certification programs. Based on collaboration within and across departments, the provider will explain improvements to the program's design that are a direct result of the faculty collaboration.

Individual Faculty Information

The course catalog can be accessed from a tab that runs along the bottom of the application spreadsheet. For every faculty member who teaches the professional core competencies found in the Framework Guidelines, including part-time and adjunct faculty, the following information must be entered into the application:

- Last Name
- First Name
- Full or Part-Time Status
- Department to which the faculty member is assigned
- Faculty Designation
- Course(s) Assigned
- Current Vitae.

REVIEW PROCESS TIMELINE

Orientation and Training

The Department has developed orientation and training programs for both program providers and reviewers. The [training materials](#) include training webinars, manuals and handbooks all found on our website. The training includes instructions to complete the excel application spreadsheet, for electronic submission, required data points and the SharePoint document delivery system. The liaisons will host webinar sessions in addition to providing direction and answering questions. These sessions will be scheduled and publicized well in advance of their offering.

Major Review costs are calculated based on the number and types of programs offered by the provider. Providers are expected to make payment once they are invoiced by the Department's billing entity. Final Determination letters will not be sent to any provider with an outstanding invoice. Liaisons will assist providers with the review cost funding formula.

Reviewers are paid a honorarium based on the number and type of program reviews assigned. Reviewers are paid when all assigned reviews are completed and the provider receives its Final Determination letter.

Review Activities

Major reviews occur on a seven year cycle. The individual provider will be informed of their specific timeline by their liaison approximately 12 months in advance of their submittal date.

As mentioned previously in this handbook, all [major review training materials](#) are available on the PDE website for all providers regardless of their review year. Providers should view the training presentation, manuals and the Major Review Handbook before beginning the application. The PDE liaisons are also available to offer technical assistance and support.

Multiple activities are involved in the application approval process, they are listed below:

1. Program providers will submit applications electronically to PDE by their due date through SharePoint.
2. The PDE liaison will review the application for completeness and to ensure embedded objects and links open.
3. PDE will provide the assigned reviewer with access to the application to be reviewed.
 - a. During the review process, the provider will not have access to the applications while under review.
 - b. The reviewer is given one month to complete the review.
 - c. The reviewer may be reviewing more than one application from the same provider.
4. The initial findings from the electronic review will be returned to the PDE

liaison at which time the rubric and findings will be reviewed.

5. If there are areas in the application that “Does Not Meet Requirements”, the application will be returned to the provider to provide additional supportive information. The provider is given one month to respond to any step that does not meet requirements.
6. Once the reviewer comments are addressed, the provider will return the application back to PDE for a reassessment.
7. The original reviewer will reassess the area(s) that required additional information and either changes their assessment to “Does Meet Requirements” or leave as “Does Not Meet Requirements” and return the application to the liaison. The reviewer is given one month to reassess the application(s).
8. If the reassessment is returned from the reviewer as “Does Not Meet Requirements”, the liaison will review the comments and work with the provider and reviewer on strategies to get the areas of concern moved to “Does Meet Requirements”.
9. If the area(s) of concern cannot be resolved, PDE will require a formal site visit whose goal will be to focus on the area(s) that need improvement and move them to a Meets designation.
 - a. The review team will consist of:
 - PDE liaison
 - Reviewer(s) with subject matter expertise in the areas of concern.
 - b. The program provider is responsible for all costs of the site visit which will include:
 - accommodations;
 - meals;
 - mileage and tolls; and
 - reviewer fee.

Program Approval

There are three levels of approval status: full approval (7- years), conditional approval (2 years), and approval denied.

Full Approval

When the program under review receives full approval, the Pennsylvania Department of Education will accept the programs’ recommendations for candidates for certification. Programs are approved for a period of seven years. The program is required to submit reports to the department as required, i.e. annual report. All recommendations for certification should be submitted in accordance with the Pennsylvania Department of Education certification procedures. BSLTQ bases the approval on the review(s) demonstrating that the program meets the program framework guidelines.

Conditional Approval

Conditional approval may be granted to a program for up to a two year time period. When a program receives conditional approval, the following steps will be taken:

1. The program provider must develop and submit an action plan to PDE for approval.
2. The plan must address problematic areas and a timeline for implementing identified improvements.
3. The specifics of reporting and/or follow-up visits will be agreed upon between PDE and the program provider during this improvement phase.
4. The program provider must submit reports to the department as required, i.e. annual report.

All recommendations for certification should be submitted in accordance with the Pennsylvania Department of Education certification procedures during the conditional approval time period. Programs that do not successfully meet the areas of concern in the major review may have their programs not approved or undergo a second comprehensive major review.

Please note: depending on the area(s) of concern, a site visit may or may not be required.

Approval Denied

Prior to a program not being approved, a site visit will take place at the expense of the program provider. When a program is denied approval, the following steps will be taken:

1. The program must terminate the admission of candidates to the program.
2. All candidates who are presently enrolled in the program, and any who were enrolled but have not yet completed the program since the previous approval decision was granted, must be formally notified of the denial. The formal notification must explain the basis for the denial and inform each candidate of the courses that must be taken in order to complete the program.
3. Efforts to facilitate the completion of the program should include collaborating with other institutions in the area in accepting coursework, transferring credits and completing other required activities that candidates may need for certification.
4. The Bureau of School Leadership and Teacher Quality must receive a list of the candidates and confirmation that they were notified. The list must include each candidate's name, PPID or social security number, number of credits needed and arrangements to assist the candidate in obtaining certification.

The department will not accept candidates for certification from programs that have been denied approval unless a teach out plan was reviewed and approved by the department. To reinstate the program, an initial application must be completed and sent through the approval process.

Appeal Process

When an institution wants to appeal a conditional approval or denied program decision, the following steps must be taken:

1. The institution must file an appeal with the Secretary of Education within thirty days from the date of program status notification from PDE.
2. The Secretary of Education and /or designee will review the following documents:
 - program application;
 - reviewer findings;
 - site visit findings and summary (if applicable);
 - a copy of an action plan if the program was granted a conditional approval;
 - outcomes of the action plan;
 - the request for appeal, and
 - evidence to support the appeal.
3. A final determination notice mailed to the institution.

Out-of-Cycle Review

The Division of Professional Education reserves the right to review a program provider and/or some of its programs out of their scheduled cycle when areas of concern are identified. PDE reviews the data reported by the provider in both the PDE Annual Report and the federally required HEA Title II reports. Based on the data collected, and other factors listed below, an out of cycle review may be triggered.

Factors may include but are not limited to:

- complaints received regarding a program or program provider;
- program completion rates;
- test pass rates;
- GPA/Test score relationships;
- LEA satisfaction with candidates;
- graduate satisfaction;
- program retention rates;
- program enrollment changes;
- professional retention rates;
- change of national accreditation status of individual programs;
- technology skills of faculty;
- unusual rate of leadership and/or faculty turnover;
- overall program rating;
- failure to follow the Framework Guidelines; and
- failure to adhere to the Chapter 49 and 354 regulations.

No criterion is meant to stand alone as an indicator and the review of annual report seeks to identify chronic concerns as opposed to those that are episodic in nature. PDE will review all of the pertinent indicators before making the decision to initiate an out-of-cycle review. The program provider would have one year to prepare for the review. In addition, the Program Provider would have access to technical assistance through their assigned PDE Liaison.

PROGRAM CLOSURE OR MODIFICATION

Closing (Discontinuing) a Program

When a program provider chooses to close or discontinue a professional educator program, the program must notify both their PDE liaison and candidates at least five semesters before the closing date if there are candidates enrolled in the program. Because this decision may have adverse consequences for the candidates, the institution is responsible for facilitating the completion of the candidate's program. When closing a program, the institution may choose to either:

1. teach out the remaining program for current candidates and not enroll new candidates, or
2. collaborate with other institutions in the area in accepting coursework, transferring credits and completing other required activities.

Providers may close a program at any time if there are no students enrolled in the program by submitting a formal letter to the assigned liaison to close the program. To reinstate a closed program, the provider must submit an initial application and undergo an approval process.

Modifying a Program

When an institution seeks to modify any of its professional educator programs, the planned modifications should be discussed with the assigned liaison in the Division of Professional Education and Teacher Quality. 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 need the approval from of the Department of Education but will not result in a formal initial re-review. The provider must submit a letter informing PDE of the change(s) including:

1. the rationale;
2. the changes;
3. the implementation date; and
4. a revised advisements sheet, when appropriate.

The liaison will review the modification for consistency with the Program Framework Guidelines and provide written notification of acceptance or concerns to the institution.

TITLE II DESIGNATION AS LOW-PERFORMING AND AT RISK PROGRAMS

Under the Federal Title II ACT of 1998 and reauthorized in 2008, states are required to report annually on the quality of teacher preparation programs in their state and make that information widely available to the general public by posting the findings on the State's website. Under the Title II regulations, all States are required to implement a system to assess the quality of each of their teacher preparation programs.