

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
STAFF NOTE

Action Item:

Simmons College: Temporary Authorization to Operate an Educator Preparation Program

Staff Recommendation:

The Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) should accept the recommendations from the Accreditation Audit Committee (AAC) to grant temporary authorization to operate for the Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) for the initial level preparation programs at Simmons College.

Rationale:

16 KAR 5:010 outlines the role and responsibilities of the AAC. The AAC has followed the regulatory procedures.

Action Question:

Should the EPSB grant temporary authorization to operate the EPP initial preparation programs at Simmons College?

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 161.028, 16 KAR 5:010

History/Background:

Existing Policy: 16 KAR 5:010 outlines the standards for accreditation of EPPs and approval of programs. Section 3 of this regulation identifies the developmental process for new educator preparation institutions. Stage One of this process requires the submission of an official letter from the chief executive officer and the governing board of the institution indicating the institution's intent to begin the developmental process to establish an EPP. Simmons College submitted the letter notifying the EPSB of its intent to seek approval to develop an initial certification educator preparation program for elementary, grades P-5, which was accepted by the EPSB in August 2022. Stage Two of the process requires the institution to submit a written narrative self-study, an EPSB Site Visitor team shall make a one day visit to the institution to verify the self-study evidence, the team then submits a written report of its finding, the institution may submit a rejoinder, and the AAC reviews the materials gathered during Stages One and Two and makes a recommendation to the EPSB with regards to temporary authorization. If approved, the temporary authorization is for two years and allows the institution to continue the developmental process by pursuing full accreditation.

Summary: Simmons College of Kentucky began in 1879 by the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky primarily as a liberal arts training institute to train the recently emancipated enslaved persons. Simmons College of Kentucky is an institution of biblical higher education dedicated to

educating people through vital academic and professional programs to become productive citizens and agents of change in society.

An EPSB Site Visitors team conducted a technical site visit evaluation of the EPP on March 26, 2024, on site at Simmons College. Site visitors are tasked with verifying the self-study evidence and submitting a report of their findings.

SITE TEAM REPORT

The establishment and development of the educator preparation program at Simmons College exemplifies the institution's dedication to serving its community and fostering positive change in society. Through strategic and energetic planning, robust support mechanisms, and a clear vision for the future, Simmons College aims to empower educators who will make a lasting impact in the field of education. Therefore, the team recommends that Simmons College be granted the two-year authorization to operate.

AAC RECOMMENDATION

On June 26, 2024, the AAC met and reviewed the EPP development materials including the New Program Application and relevant evidence, the self-study report, and the on-site presentations and interviews. The AAC recommended no revisions to the Site Visit Report Findings.

Pursuant to 16 KAR 5:010 the AAC recommends that Simmons College be granted the two-year authorization to operate.

Budget Impact: KDE resources (staff) to facilitate the review and accreditation processes.

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