

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
STAFF NOTE

Action Item:

Simmons College of Kentucky: Approval of Initial Programs

Staff's Recommendation:

The Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) should accept the recommendations from the Accreditation Audit Committee (AAC) to approve the initial preparation programs at Simmons College of Kentucky.

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 the Education Preparation Provider (EPP) approval for the initial preparation programs at Simmons College of Kentucky?

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 161.028, 16 KAR 5:010

History/Background:

Existing Policy: 16 KAR 5:010 identifies the requirement and processes for educator preparation providers to demonstrate evidence of meeting standards for accreditation and program approval.

Summary: An Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP) Site Visitors team conducted the virtual site visit evaluation of the EPP on October 8-9, 2025.

Under AAQEP guidelines, the Quality Review Team (QRT) conducts a review of the programs put forward by the EPP. The team considers the case presented in the Initial Accreditation Report aligned to the 2025 standards by verifying the claims made in the report and by gathering additional relevant evidence to corroborate the claims. The AAQEP Accreditation Council, upon reviewing the accreditation materials, will determine the final decision concerning whether to accredit or not accredit.

AAQEP Accreditation Commissioners' Decision:

The AAQEP Accreditation Commissioners met on January 30, 2026, and made the accreditation decision and found all standards were met by the EPP at Simmons College of Kentucky for the initial programs. A letter of approval was sent on February 27, 2026, to the institution.

ACCREDITATION AUDIT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

On May 19, 2026 the AAC met and reviewed the initial programs for Simmons College of Kentucky. 16 KAR 5:010 requires EPPs to submit each of its program review documents for review prior to its on-site accreditation visit. Simmons College of Kentucky submitted their programs and received written notification of the results of the program review.

Pursuant to 16 KAR 5:010, Section 19, the AAC recommends: (1) Approval of the initial level educator preparation programs at Simmons College of Kentucky.

Budget Impact: Recurrent costs are incurred related to Kentucky Department of Education staff facilitating the review processes for educator preparation providers to demonstrate evidence of meeting standards for accreditation and program approval.

Groups Consulted and Brief Summary of Responses:

As indicated above, AAQEP met on January 30, 2026 and, thereafter, sent a letter of approval to the institution.

As indicated above, the AAC met on May 19, 2026 and recommended approval of the initial level educator preparation programs at Simmons College of Kentucky.

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