

## **KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

### **STAFF NOTE**

#### **Consent Item:**

Simmons College: Approval of the Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education Initial Undergraduate, Traditional Route Program.

#### **Staff's Recommendation:**

The Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) should approve Simmons College's initial undergraduate Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education program as recommended by the Program Review Committee.

#### **Rationale:**

The submitted programs have demonstrated compliance with the EPSB regulations for admission and standards alignment requirements established in 16 KAR 2:010. The proposed educator preparation programs follow the appropriate regulations (16 KAR 5:010; 16 KAR 2:010) outlining program requirements for program approval as established by the EPSB. The programs have completed the review process and received a recommendation for approval from the Program Review Committee.

#### **Applicable Statutes and Regulation:**

KRS 161.028, KRS 161.030, 16 KAR 5:010, 16 KAR 5:020, 16 KAR 2:010

#### **Action Question:**

Should the EPSB approve Simmons College's initial undergraduate Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education program?

#### **History/Background:**

***Existing Policy:*** KRS 161.028 and KRS 161.030 require the EPSB to establish curricula for educator preparation programs in Kentucky and approve such programs for Educator Preparation Providers. Staff within the Division of Educator Preparation and Certification as well as the Program Review Committee evaluate program review documents submitted for approval against performance-based program certification guidelines established by the EPSB.

***Summary:*** Simmons College is requesting approval for its Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education (IECE) initial undergraduate program that will prepare educators to support the development of children from birth through five (5) years, including those with special needs, across diverse educational and community settings. IECE is a specialized field that combines early childhood education with elements of special education, family engagement, and developmental psychology. The program equips students with knowledge of cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development and emphasizes practical application through field experiences in homes, classrooms, and community programs. Students learn to design evidence-based curricula, assess child development, and collaborate with families and professionals to support young children's learning.

Staff within the Division of Educator Preparation and Certification as well as the Program Review Committee evaluated program review documents submitted by Simmons College against performance-based program certification guidelines established by the EPSB and determined that this proposal meets all requirements set forth by the EPSB.

***Budget Impact:*** There is no budgetary impact.

**Groups Consulted and Brief Summary of Responses:**

Staff within the Division of Educator Preparation and Certification have reviewed this program proposal and determined that the program meets the requirements for approval. This program proposal also has completed the review process and received a recommendation for approval from the Program Review Committee pursuant to 16 KAR 5:010, Section 22.

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