Report to the North Carolina General Assembly

Educator Preparation Program Weighted Model Proposal

SL 2019-149 (HB107), SECTION 3(b)

Date Due: February 15, 2020
DPI Chronological Schedule, 2019-2020
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Executive Summary

Recent passage of HB107 requires the State Board of Education (SBE) in consultation with the Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) and the Professional Educator Preparation and Standards Commission (PEPSC) to develop a formulaic, performance-based weighted model for comparing Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) along with suggestions to the Joint Legislative Educator Oversight Committee (JLEOC) as to how to employ the model along with potential legislative changes to enable the use of the model. This report documents the work, to date, on the development of that model, outlines the initial proposal sent to the SBE for consideration, and associated legislative changes to use the model.

In January 2020, PEPSC proposed a three-domain model to the SBE for consideration that considers the average of four measures of EPP performance at 55 percent weight; one-year teacher retention at 10 percent weight; and two stakeholder perception surveys of the EPP at 35 percent. Additionally, PEPSC recommended the piloting of an unweighted fourth domain on the diversity of candidates in EPPs for two years to collect data and inform PEPSC whether to add the domain to the overall weighted composite model. Implementation would remain largely on the same timeline as outlined in SB599.

At the February 2020 SBE meeting, the Board acknowledged this proposal was a strong initial step but voted the model to return to PEPSC for additional revision considerations including:

- Formally including diversity in the accountability model in such a way that the accounts for the context of the individual EPP now as opposed to the two-year pilot;
- Establishing a threshold for survey responses that ensures valid and generalizable results for an individual EPP;
- Differentially weighting the performance measures included in Domain 1 to reflect the relative importance of edTPA/PPAT;
- Extending the duration of the sanctioning period to give EPPs that fall into a warning sanction to have sufficient time to implement improving strategies to pull back into compliance.

These suggestions were returned to PEPSC on Thursday, February 13 for further consideration and evaluation.

This report was developed to meet the obligation outlined in HB107 to provide the JLEOC with an update on the development of this accountability model. It includes a review of the legislative obligations in HB107, a history of the model development to date, and the initially proposed model. Appendices that include a review of the 2-year retention rates of EPP candidates and corresponding legislative changes to the initial model proposal are also provided.
**Legislative Direction**

On July 22, 2019, the North Carolina legislature passed Session Law 2019-149 which establishes specific criteria for educator preparation program accountability and corresponding sanctions when those accountability measures are not met. Also included in this law under SECTION 3.(a) is a requirement that the SBE, in consultation with the NCDPI and the PEPSC, develop a formulaic, performance-based weighted model for the purposes of comparing the annual report card information between each EPP pursuant to G.S. 115C-269.50.

SECTION 3.(b) of this law provides more clarity as to the specifics of the report. The State Board, in consultation with the NCDPI and PEPSC, shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by February 15, 2020 on the following:

(i) the development of the formulaic, performance-based weighted model for EPPs as required by subsection (a) of this section,
(ii) recommendations on the purposes and uses of the weighted model,
(iii) recommendations on the timeline for possible implementation of the weighted model, and
(iv) any legislative changes needed for implementation of the model.

Additionally, Section 3.5 requires that PEPSC study the inclusion of a two-year retention rate for individuals who completed the EPP and became initially licensed and employed in a North Carolina public school and recommend a retention rate performance standard for EPPs. This report outlines the performance-based weighted model developed by PEPSC and addresses each of the requirements established in Session Law 2019-149.

**Development of the Model Proposal**

Work to develop a robust accountability model was ongoing in PEPSC subcommittees since November 2018 (see Appendix A for a complete list of meetings). Throughout that time, the group sought additional input from a variety of stakeholders across the academic field including EPP Program leadership, the North Carolina Association for Colleges and Teacher Educators (NCACTE), the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities (NCICU), the University of North Carolina General Administration (UNC-GA), the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Task Force, and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). The Commission also sought counsel from the Education Policy Initiative at Carolina (EPIC) to build hypothetical models. In addition to stakeholder input, the Commission also reviewed models from other states to help inform their decision making. PEPSC was also mindful of leveraging the existing performance measures outlined in Session Law 2019-149 into a proposed model, which include:

(1) performance based on the standards and criteria for annual evaluations of licensed employees,
(2) proficiency and growth of students taught by educators holding an initial professional license, to the extent practicable. When available, EVAAS data shall be used to measure student growth, and
(3) results from an educator satisfaction survey, developed by the State Board with stakeholder input, performed at the end of the educator’s first year of teaching after receiving an initial professional license.
The Proposed Model

The proposed model that PEPSC submitted to the SBE for consideration utilizes a three-domain model (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Proposed 3-Domain EPP Accountability Model

Domain 1: Performance (55% Weight)
- Teacher Evaluations
- Student Growth
- Student Proficiency
- Pedagogy Assessment

Domain 2: Retention (10% Weight)
- One-Year Retention

Domain 3: Stakeholder Perceptions (35% Weight)
- Recent Graduate Survey
- Employer Survey

Domain 1 contains those performance measures with which the EPP maintains the most direct control and influence. Four sub-domains are included in Domain 1:

1. Performance based on the standards and criteria for annual evaluations of licensed employees. Data to meet this subdomain will be collected from the existing North Carolina Educator Evaluation System (NCEES). This measure is also one of the three measures required in Session Law 2019-149.

2. Growth of students taught by educators holding an initial professional license. For this measure data from the Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS) will be leveraged. A note here is that while the existing performance measures outlined in Session Law 2019-149 combine growth and proficiency measures into one composite performance measure, the Commission recommends each of these measures be included independently of one another in this domain.

3. Proficiency of students taught by educators holding an initial professional license. Currently, the conventional method of collecting this measure in North Carolina has the potential to negatively impact candidate placement, particularly in hard to staff schools. Until a collection method can be developed that mitigates this challenge, use of proficiency of students is not practicable or recommended. NCDPI is currently working on alternative measurement strategies to measure student proficiency.

4. Percentage of EPP candidates passing a nationally normed and valid pedagogy assessment to determine clinical practice performance. For this measure, the Commission recommends allowing data from the Educative Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA) or the Praxis Performance Assessment for Teachers (PPAT) to meet the requirement. As of September 2019, all candidates, both traditional and residential, must pass one of these assessments in partial requirement for licensure.

Domain 2 is comprised of only one measure – one-year teacher retention. Stakeholder input on this item is mixed. While there is general acknowledgement EPPs must provide candidates into the pipeline that have the requisite skills to be effective in the classroom and ultimately stay in the
classroom, many stakeholders are reluctant to hold an EPP accountable to how long teachers stay in a North Carolina school position. While most agree that an ill-prepared teacher can be a compelling reason for attrition, a license-holder’s decision for leaving the classroom (or seeking a teaching position in another state) may have nothing to do with the preparation of the candidate. For this reason, the Commission recommends consideration of retention rates upon the completion of one year of teaching, conceding that attrition due to poor preparation in the first year is more likely than later in a teacher’s career. This concern for assigning measures in an accountability model that programs have little or no control over is why Domain 2 has the least weight of the three domains. For an analysis of Two-Year Retention Rates, see Appendix B.

Domain 3 seeks to capture perceptions of EPP effectiveness from the two primary stakeholders impacted by EPP candidates: the graduates of the EPPs and the principals who hire them. Data for both are already collected across the state. The Recent Graduate Survey is a survey of all teachers in their first year of teaching to capture how they feel prepared to meet their professional responsibilities during their first year on the job. This is also the third performance measure required of EPPs in Session Law 2019-149. The Employer Survey asks principals to consider a recent graduate’s effectiveness relative to other first year-teachers across the North Carolina teaching standards.

Table 1 provides a comparison between the accountability variables required in Session Law 2019-149 and those proposed.

**Table 1: Differences Between Session Law 2019-149 Accountability Requirements and Those Proposed by PEPSC**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session Law 2019-149 Accountability Variables</th>
<th>Proposed Accountability Variables</th>
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<td>NCEES</td>
<td>NCEES</td>
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<tr>
<td>EVAAS and Proficiency (when practicable)</td>
<td>EVAAS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recent Graduate Survey</td>
<td>Recent Graduate Survey</td>
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<td>edTPA/PPAT</td>
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<td>1-year retention</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Employer Survey</td>
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**Converting the Weighted Model to a Level System**

While there is interest from legislators in being able to compare overall effectiveness among EPPs outlined in Session Law 2019-149, there is consensus among education stakeholders that rank ordering EPPs using only the weighted composite is too narrow to capture the complexity and variation of the EPPs. In other words, using the composite to say one school is the 6th best school and another is 23rd is perhaps a misleading representation due to many factors in EPPs not captured in the composite. The recommendation from the Commission is to convert raw composite scores to a more generalized four-point level system where a four indicates an EPP is ‘exemplary,’ three is ‘accomplished,’ two is ‘proficient,’ and one is ‘needs improvement’. In this manner stakeholders have a quick and easy way to understand how one program is generally measuring up to others across the state.

**Assignment of Sanctions**
Session Law 2019-149 currently assigns sanctions to an EPP when any of the three performance measures are not met by any subgroup (race, gender, ethnicity). This approach, while rigorous, has the potential for serious unintended consequences to the teacher pipeline:

- Sanction policy can disproportionately impact the largest programs where sample sizes are large enough to disaggregate across more subgroups than smaller programs.
- Applying sanctions at the subgroup level may cause an EPP to narrow its recruitment strategy to only those subgroups that historically perform well on the accountability measures. This approach is antithetical to diversifying the teacher workforce.

To mitigate these potential negative impacts of the current sanction policy, the Commission recommends applying sanctions at the weighted composite level instead of the subgroup level. Under the proposed model, any EPP identified in the level 1 – ‘needs improvement’ area would be subject to sanction. In doing so, an EPP could still be in compliance if a subgroup were below standard if its overall composite measure demonstrated performance at level 2 or higher. Sanctioning at the composite level standardizes EPP accountability and the need for EPPs to work towards high standards and improvement without jeopardizing the pipeline. A limitation to sanctioning at the composite level is that it can potentially mask individual measure deficiencies. The Commission has confidence that the future online dashboard will publicly report the EPP’s performance by subgroup so that EPPs will be incentivized to address any deficiencies by subgroup.

**Considering Issues of Diversity**

Throughout the development of the weighted composite model proposal, the Commission spent the most time in discussion around the possibility of developing a way to promote diversifying the pipeline in the model (Figure 2). Current research calls for an increase in the diversity of the teacher pipeline as a means to improve student learning and open up entrance into the teaching profession. While there is consensus on the importance of promoting teacher diversity in the EPP community, the Commission was divided on whether it should be a component of the weighted composite model proposal.

**Figure 2: Proposed 4-Domain EPP Accountability Model**

Some members of PEPSC voiced concern that there were limits on how much influence an EPP has on recruitment. Because traditional EPPs typically accept students in their junior year into the program, they recruit largely from within their institution. This means that for most traditional EPP programs recruitment is limited to the demographics within their institution. Another concern was
that setting an example in an accountability model for promoting diversity without additional resources and changes to supporting factors influencing the teacher pipeline may cause unintended sanctions on otherwise high functioning EPPs. The concerns raised are similar to those raised earlier regarding the current sanctioning requirements. Other Commission members championed the idea of including diversity components in the composite, citing the lack of meaningful change in the teacher pipeline demographics to date.

In the end, it is the recommendation of the Commission to postpone implementation of a model that includes a diversity domain until more data can be collected to test the implications of the additional measures on the model. At the February Board of Education meeting, two members of the board were strongly in favor of including the diversity domain immediately into the model.

**Proposed Pilot Phase and Action Plan for the Fourth Domain: Diversity**

PEPSC proposed the following action plan as a strategy to refine the structure of the fourth domain and to address challenges as noted above. The two-year pilot phase would include a proposal on implementation of this domain to the State Board of Education after two years of data identification, collection and analysis. In addition, the two-year pilot would also create a window where PEPSC and North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) can work with EPPs to consider data issues as noted, and how preliminary data can further inform recruiting, admissions, and program matriculation strategies and outcomes.

Upon adoption by the State Board of Education, PEPSC would then create a task force to create an action plan and resulting strategies to pilot and potentially fully implement the fourth domain. This plan will be presented to PEPSC by June 2020 for consideration and possible recommendation to the SBE in July 2020. The plan will include the following components, as well as others the task force may consider critical to success.

**Component 1**: Finalize variables to be collected and considered as informative to ensuring thresholds for diversifying EPP candidate demographics that ensure a diverse teaching profession in North Carolina.

**Component 2**: Assess availability and accessibility of critical data at the institutional and EPP level, and address challenges that may emerge.

**Component 3**: Create and refine appropriate mechanisms to provide data to NC DPI as part of the accountability model and any associated dashboard tools.

**Component 4**: Solicit from EPPs, schools and school districts and critical stakeholders’ perspectives and recommendations for resources, supports and incentives that may be important to efforts to recruit, admit, retain and graduate cohorts of EPP candidates that will bring greater diversity to the teaching profession in the state.

**SBE Returns Initial Proposal to PEPSC for Further Consideration**

The proposed accountability model from PEPSC came to the SBE as a discussion item in January 2020. At its meeting on February 6, 2020, the State Board voted to return the proposal to PEPSC for further revisions and consideration. While many SBE members acknowledged that the proposed model captures much of what is needed in a robust and comprehensive accountability
model for EPPs, SBE members identified four areas that merited additional consideration by PEPSC:

- Formally include diversity in the accountability model in such a way that the accounts for the context of the individual EPP and takes growth into consideration now, as opposed to the two-year pilot;
- Establish a threshold for survey responses that ensures valid and generalizable results for an individual EPP;
- Differentially weight the performance measures included in Domain 1 and give edTPA/PPAT the greatest weight in the domain given that it is the variable EPPs have the most direct control over; and
- Extend the duration of the sanctioning period to give EPPs that fall into a warning sanction to have sufficient time to implement improving strategies to pull back into compliance.

These suggestions were brought to the February PEPSC meeting held on February 13, 2020. PEPSC assigned the review back to a subcommittee. It is unknown how much time will be needed for PEPSC to review these suggestions and consider amending the model proposal.
### Appendix A: PEPSC Subcommittee Meeting Dates and Times

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcommittee</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>Educator Preparation</td>
<td>November 26, 2018</td>
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<td>Assessment and Performance</td>
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Appendix B: Two-Year Retention Rates by EPP

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<th>Institution</th>
<th>2015-16 Completers</th>
<th>2015-16 Comps Employed in 2016-17 (Base Year)</th>
<th>Comps Employed 1 Yr Later (2017-18)</th>
<th>Comps Employed 2 Yrs Later (2018-19)</th>
<th>1 Yr Retention Rate</th>
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<td>Teach for America</td>
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<td>Employees</td>
<td>Completers</td>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>Retention Rate Base Year</td>
<td>Retention Rate 2 Yr Later</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1,987</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,798</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,616</strong></td>
<td><strong>90.49</strong></td>
<td><strong>81.33</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

1. '2015-16 Completers' are identified in ETS data by the variable 'Category=Completed'.
2. 'Employment' is based on employees paid from Object Codes 121, 123, 124, or 127. These are Teacher Object Codes.
3. '2015-16 Comps Employed in 2016-17 (Base Year)' are the number of 2015-16 completers who were employed in 2016-17. This is the group of completers that is used to determine retention.
4. 'Comps Employed 1 Yr Later' are completers employed in the base year (2016-17) who remained employed as a teacher in 2017-2018.
5. 'Comps Employed 2 Yrs Later' are completers employed in the base year (2016-17) who remained employed as a teacher in 2018-2019.
6. '1 Yr Retention Rate' is the percentage of base year completers employed in 2016-2017.
7. '2 Yr Retention Rate' is the percentage of base year completers employed in 2017-2018.
8. 2016-2017 is the first year of TFA completer data we have. Because all people in TFA are employed while in program. Therefore the completer year and the base year (2016-2017) are the same.
9. The year TFAs completed was used as the basis for retention rather than everyone in the program was made because those in the program are required to be employed. Once they complete, they may leave. This makes a better comparison to IHE completers.
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019

SESSION LAW 2019-149
HOUSE BILL 107

AN ACT TO MAKE CHANGES TO THE EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND DATA REPORTING SYSTEM.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 115C-269.35 reads as rewritten:

"§ 115C-269.35. Accountability for educator preparation programs.

(1) Performance Measures. – The State Board shall adopt rules necessary to establish standards of performance to govern the continuing accountability of all EPPs. At a minimum, the performance standards shall be based on the following information three domains: that is disaggregated with respect to race, sex, and ethnicity:

(a) EPP performance measures including:
   a. Performance based on the standards and criteria for annual evaluations of licensed employees.
   b. Proficiency and growth of students taught by educators holding an initial professional license, to the extent practicable.
   c. Growth of students taught by educators holding an initial professional license. When available, EVAAS data shall be used to measure student growth.
   d. Percentage of EPP candidates passing a nationally normed and valid pedagogy assessment to determine clinical practice performance.

(b) Annual Performance Reports. – The State Board shall require all recognized EPPs to

(c) Stakeholder Perceptions including:
   a. Results from an educator satisfaction survey, developed by the State Board with stakeholder input, performed at the end of the educator’s first year of teaching after receiving an initial professional license.
   b. Results of an employer survey, developed by the State Board with stakeholder input, performed at the end of the educator’s first year of teaching after receiving an initial professional license.

Domains shall be weighted by the State Board and the resultant weighted performance average of the three domains shall be used to determine report overall EPP Performance and for issuing sanctions when defined standards are not met.

Annual Performance Reports. – The State Board shall require all recognized EPPs to
submit annual performance reports. The performance reports shall provide the State Board with a focused review of the EPPs and the current authorization process in order to ensure that the programs produce graduates that are well prepared to teach.

At a minimum, the annual report shall contain the following indicators disaggregated by race, sex, and ethnicity where possible and the individual candidate confidentiality is not jeopardized:

(1) Performance data from subsection (a) of this section.
(2) Data related to the EPP’s compliance with requirements for field supervision of students during their internship and residency experiences.
(3) The following information:
   a. The number of students who apply to candidacy of the EPP.
   b. The number of students admitted as candidates of the EPP.
   c. The number of students completing the program.
   d. The number of graduates of the EPP licensed in North Carolina.
   e. The number of graduates of the EPP employed in North Carolina.
   f. The number and percentage of students who convert from a residency license to either an initial professional license or a continuing professional license.
   g. Any other information required by federal law.
(4) Quality of students entering the EPP, including the average grade point average and average score on preprofessional skills tests or college entrance exams that assess reading, writing, mathematics, and other competencies.
(5) Graduation rates.
(6) Time-to-graduation rates.
(7) Pass rates of graduates on professional, pedagogy, and content area examinations for the purpose of licensure.
(8) Percentage of graduates receiving initial professional licenses.
(9) The activities offered by the program that are designed to prepare educators, including general education teachers and special education teachers, to effectively teach the following:
   a. Students with disabilities.
   b. Students of limited English proficiency.
(10) The activities offered by the program that are designed to prepare educators to do the following:
   a. Integrate technology effectively into curricula and instruction, including activities consistent with the principles of universal design for learning.
   b. Use technology effectively to collect, manage, and analyze data to improve teaching and learning for the purpose of increasing student academic achievement.
(11) The retention of beginning educators in the profession for at least two years after licensure in North Carolina.
(12) The results of surveys given to school principals that involve evaluation of the program’s effectiveness in preparing participants to succeed in the classroom, based on experience with employed program participants.
(13) Any other information necessary to enable the State Board to assess the effectiveness of the program on the basis of educator retention and success criteria adopted by the State Board.

(d) Submission of Annual Performance Reports. – Performance reports shall be provided annually to
the following:

1. The State Board.
2. The board of trustees or board of directors of the entity submitting the report.

(e) Information Requests by EPPs. – The State Board of Education shall annually provide, upon request, the data required to be included in an EPP’s annual performance report related to subdivisions (1) and (2) of subsection (a) of this section and subdivision (11) of subsection (b) of this section. The State Board of Education shall provide this information to an EPP as aggregate data and disaggregated by race, sex, and ethnicity and shall not be limited by small sample sizes traditionally applied for public display to protect confidentiality. Notwithstanding Article 21A of this Chapter, local school administrative units shall provide to the State Board of Education for the purposes of these information requests any North Carolina Educator Evaluation System effectiveness status assigned to teachers based on queries from the State Board. The State Board of Education shall not report aggregated or disaggregated data to the EPP that reveals confidential information in a teacher’s personnel file, as defined by Article 21A of this Chapter, such as making the effectiveness status personally identifiable to an individual teacher."

SECTION 1.5. G.S. 115C-269.45(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Accountability Statuses. – The State Board shall at least annually review the accountability status of each EPP. The State Board shall adopt rules necessary for the sanction of EPPs that do not meet accountability standards or comply with State law or rules. The rules shall provide for the assignment of warned, probation, or revoked statuses according to the following criteria:

1. Warned. – An EPP shall be assigned warned status if the program meets any of the following criteria:
   a. Fails to meet the performance standards set by the State Board for the overall performance of all its students as measured by the weighted performance average on any of the indicators set forth in G.S. 115C-269.35(a) in any one year.
   b. Fails to meet the performance standards in any two sex, race, or ethnicity demographic groups on any of the indicators set forth in G.S. 115C-269.35(a) in any one year.
   c. Fails to meet the performance standards for any one sex, race, or ethnicity demographic group on any of the indicators set forth in G.S. 115C-269.35(a) for two consecutively measured years, regardless of whether the deficiency is in the same standard.

3. The State Board determines that the EPP has violated applicable laws or rules that should result in warned status. Probation. – An EPP shall be assigned probation status if the program meets any either of the following criteria:
   a. Fails to meet the performance standards set by the State Board for the overall performance of all its students as measured by the weighted performance average on any of the indicators set forth in G.S. 115C-269.35(a) for two consecutively measured years.
   b. Fails to meet the performance standards in any three sex, race, or ethnicity demographic groups on any of the indicators set forth in G.S. 115C-269.35(a) in any one year.
   c. Fails to meet the performance standards for any one sex, race, or ethnicity demographic group on any of the indicators set forth in G.S. 115C-269.35(a) for three consecutively measured years, regardless of whether the deficiency is in the same standard.

b. The State Board determines that the EPP has violated applicable laws
or rules that should result in probation status.

(4) Revoked. – An EPP shall be assigned revoked status and its approval to recommend students for educator licensure revoked if it meets either of the following criteria:

a. Is assigned probation status for three consecutively measured years. Fails to meet the performance standards set by the State Board for the overall performance of all its students as measured by the weighted performance average set forth in G.S. 115C-269.35(a) for three consecutively measured years.

b. Has been on probation status for one year and the State Board determines that revoking the program’s approval is reasonably necessary to achieve the purposes of this Article.