

§ 115C-284.1. Administrator preparation programs.

(a) Role of APPs. – To recommend candidates for licensure, an administrator preparation program (APP) shall be approved by the State Board. For the purposes of this section, an APP is any entity that meets all of the following:

- (1) Prepares, trains, and recommends candidates for administrator licensure.
- (2) Leads to a Master's of School Administration (MSA) or Master's of Education in Educational Leadership unless the candidate already holds a master's or doctoral degree in an education-related field.
- (3) Meets one of the following:
 - a. Is accredited by a programmatic accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary of Education pursuant to federal law.
 - b. Was approved by the State Board of Education as a school administrator preparation program prior to April 1, 2023.

(b) State Board Authority. – The State Board shall have the authority to approve an APP that meets the requirements established by rule as provided in subsection (c) of this section.

(c) Rules for Granting State Approval. – The State Board shall adopt rules for granting approval to APPs in accordance with this section. The rules shall ensure the following:

- (1) A rigorous approval process that requires that the criteria in this section are met.
- (2) An application process, peer review, and technical assistance provided by the State Board.
- (3) An approval period of five years and process for renewal of approval.

(d) Minimum Approval Standards. – At a minimum, the rules established as provided in subsection (c) of this section shall require APPs to meet the following requirements:

- (1) Require all candidates to complete an internship that is at least 500 hours in duration.
- (2) Require the development of portfolios that meet criteria adopted by the State Board and provide evidence that candidates are applying their training to actual school needs and challenges.
- (3) Require that all APP candidates demonstrate competencies in (i) using digital and other instructional technologies and (ii) supporting teachers and other school personnel to use digital and other instructional technologies to ensure provision of high-quality, integrated digital teaching and learning to all students.
- (4) Align with the standards for the evaluation of school executives and specifically address the use of the results of the Teacher Working Conditions Survey.
- (5) Require evidence of a high level of institutional commitment, including dedicated resources, for APP improvements and redesign.
- (6) Require the use of cross-functional work teams to determine a common curriculum framework that (i) is designed to align with defined standards, (ii) includes rigorous core courses, and (iii) will produce administrators who meet the defined standards. The cross-functional work teams shall include school-based personnel, faculty from schools of education and other disciplines from institutions of higher education, and representatives of State agencies.
- (7) Require the use of cross-functional work teams to design and periodically update specific standards regarding placement, required activities, and evaluations of clinical experiences. These standards shall include appropriate training for the school leaders who agree to accept and supervise interns.

- (8) Require written agreements between the institution of higher education and a public school unit to govern their shared responsibility for (i) recruitment and preparation of school administrators, especially with regard to clinical experiences, including the internship, and (ii) a new administrator's success once employed.
 - (9) Require authentic partnerships between adjunct faculty and full-time faculty to fully address the need for both practical, field-based experience and academic, theory-based experience. These partnerships may require a change in the institution of higher education's definition of scholarly activity and its reward system.
 - (10) Incorporate the criteria developed in accordance with G.S. 116-74.21 for assessing proposals under the School Administrator Training Program.
- (e) The State Board of Education shall develop rules to determine whether an applicant who completed an administrator preparation program outside the State meets or exceeds the requirements to hold a North Carolina administrator license. (2017-189, s. 2(k); 2023-125, s. 1(e).)