



March 9, 2016

Onsite Visit Report

Bellevue University

March 8, 2016

On January 13, 2016 Bellevue University (BU) submitted a formal application to the Nebraska Department of Education for consideration to become an approved Teacher Preparation Program. Rule 20 (*Regulations for the Approval of Teacher Education Programs, 92 NAC 20*), describes the process and associated timelines for approval of the application. The first step of the approval process includes an onsite visit by a team to report on the institution's ability to comply with the provisions of Rule 20.

Seven team members participated in the onsite visit. They represent the Nebraska Council on Teacher Education, the Nebraska Department of Education, the Nebraska State Education Association, public and nonpublic approved teacher education programs, and school systems. In addition, a member of the State Board was present as an observer for the interview and presentation portion of the visit.

The team reviewed the substantial materials provided with the January 13, 2016 application and met via conference call in February to identify potential areas of inquiry and/or to determine needs for additional materials or information for the March 8, 2016 visit. The visit provided an opportunity to validate information provided, hear presentations from BU faculty and administrators, interview BU personnel, and examine additional documentation provided for the visit.

As a result of the team's review, the full consensus is that the Commissioner recommend to the State Board that Provisional Approval be granted to Bellevue University. This permits BU to phase in a teacher education program, excluding clinical practice, over a period of time not to exceed three (3) years.

This recommendation is based on the following findings:

- The application submitted was complete and addressed all required application components outlined in Rule 20, with some areas exceeding planning expectations for a preliminary application.
- Capacity in place is appropriate for what would reasonably be expected at this point in the development process.
- Administration, faculty and staff are engaged and knowledgeable about the process and express a clear commitment to developing a quality teacher preparation program.
- The plan includes a realistic and focused approach to development of an on-campus/residential program with a focus on capitalizing on existing areas of strength for endorsements programs to be developed.
- Existing capacity in areas such as assessment and technology to support candidate development and success

The team supports the following areas as appropriate points for continuing development over the course of the provisional approval, most of which were already identified by BU:

- Outreach and collaboration with other Nebraska institutions and engagement in other PK-12 initiatives.
- Participation (as guests) at the Nebraska Council on Teacher Education (NCTE) meetings and the Nebraska Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (NACTE) meetings and events.
- Development of an organizational chart which identifies an appropriate line of authority for the Teacher Education Coordinator (anticipated to be hired early summer 2016 and subsequent to Board authorization to proceed). Ongoing preparation to meet other personnel requirements over the course of the approval process, with emphasis on the certification officer who will have significant responsibilities associated with Rule 21, *Issuance of Certificates and Permits to Teach, Counsel, Supervise and Administer in Nebraska Schools*.
- Continuing development of courses and associated matrices for each of the endorsement programs identified in the application. There has been significant development in this area and these materials will be a focus of the 2017 visit.

In summary, the Team found the material review and onsite visit to support that Bellevue University should receive Provisional Approval to move forward with their goal to develop a teacher preparation program. BU understands that if granted provisional approval in 2016, they will be required to submit a Provisional Approval Report to the Commissioner by March 1, 2017 which includes documentation that candidates have been advised of the provisional approval status, there is continuing participation by school systems for field-based experiences, and identifies the progress/degree to which the institution is moving forward with achieving full compliance with the provisions of Rules 20 , 21, 23 (*Regulations for the Basic Skills Competency Testing of Teachers and Administrators*), and 24 (*Regulations for Certificate Endorsements*).

Questions regarding this Report or any other aspects of the recommendation can be directed to:

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