

Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

September 12, 2025

Agenda Item: Dordt University Educator Preparation Program Approval

State Board Goal: Goal 3

State Board Role/Authority: The State Board of Education sets standards and approves practitioner preparation programs based on those standards. Iowa Code section 256.7(3) and 281 Iowa Administrative rule chapter 79.

Presenter(s): Stephanie S. TeKippe, Education Program Consultant
Division of Teacher Quality and Innovation

Attachment(s): One

Recommendation: It is recommended that the State Board award full approval to Dordt University educator preparation programs through the next review scheduled for the 2031-2032 academic year.

Background: Dordt University in Sioux Center, Iowa offers traditional teacher and principal preparation programs. Dordt University's education department has provided evidence that all programs are in compliance with Iowa Administrative Code chapter 79. Additionally, they have demonstrated compliance with the Bureau of Educational Examiners' requirements for each endorsement offered through the institution.



Department of Education

Educator Preparation Program Approval Report

Dordt University

Site Visit: January 19-22, 2025

Presented to the Iowa State Board of Education: September 12, 2025

Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
400 E. 14th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319-0146
State of Iowa

State Board of Education

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Ms. Stephanie Erps, St. Ambrose University

Recommendation to the Board

Program	Recommendation
Teacher Preparation Program	Full Approval
Administrative Preparation Program	Full Approval

Dordt University Program Representatives

Dr. Dave Mulder, Chair of Education, Dordt University
Dr. Abby DeGroot, Director of Teacher Preparation, Dordt University
Dr. Matthew Beimers, Director of the Master of Education and School Leadership, Dordt University

Executive Summary

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Iowa State Board of Education (State Board) grant full approval for Dordt University's educator preparation programs.

Dordt University's education unit has demonstrated compliance with state requirements for offering high-quality preparation programs. They effectively addressed initial concerns or presented detailed plans for resolution in the coming months including a clear timeline and strategy. The unit responded promptly and devised an action plan to implement recommendations.

It is important to note that recommendations are intended solely for the program's continuous enhancement and often surpass basic standards, there is no immediate action necessary beyond a thoughtful response. Concerns will be revisited annually over the next three years following program approval. Additionally, the recommendations and concerns identified in this review will be reevaluated during the subsequent site visit cycle as part of our commitment to continuous improvement.

Governance and Resources Standard

The Governance and Resources standard is considered met.

The review team commended the unit for embedding National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) standards throughout the conceptual framework, course content and clinical experiences, ensuring alignment across the program. The team also recognized the program director's careful oversight in verifying that all candidates completed program milestones and met Board of Educational Examiners requirements prior to licensure recommendation.

The team noted Dordt University's proactive efforts to address relevant and timely education issues, including the use of optional webinars focused on meeting the unique needs of all learners. While the webinars were previously shared with current students and alumni, the team recommended they also be incorporated into course and clinical experiences. The unit committed to embed one webinar into each of the four lab classes. Students will be required to reflect on the content and connect it to NELP standards, strengthening the academic and practical application of this initiative.

The review team identified no areas of concern under Chapter 79.

Diversity Standard

The Diversity standard is considered met.

The review team recognized the unit's strong commitment of resources to support program offerings on and off campus, including coursework, field experiences and international opportunities. Experiences for candidates were embedded into the unit culture and the team commended the unit's efforts to provide a wide variety of meaningful opportunities for all candidates across program levels.

No recommendations were issued as part of this review.

The review team identified no compliance concerns under Chapter 79.

Faculty Standard

The Faculty standard is considered met.

The review team consistently found the faculty to be a major strength of the program. Through surveys, classroom visits and interviews with stakeholders, faculty were celebrated for their dedication and professionalism. The unit was further commended for its strong commitment to co-teaching practices, which require intentional collaboration and institutional support. Faculty also demonstrated comprehensive engagement with the field, supported by detailed documentation of their efforts.

The team provided one recommendation regarding the consistent application of the 40-hour faculty log requirement. While some faculty had clear documentation, evidence of consistent implementation across the unit was lacking. The team recommended establishing a formal protocol to ensure that all faculty members log at least eight hours annually, clarify what experiences count toward the requirement and encourage variety in field-based experiences. The unit responded by committing to a structured communication and monitoring process that includes annual memos, reminders and director-level oversight to ensure compliance with the 40-hour requirement.

Two compliance concerns were identified. First, the team found misalignment between some faculty members' supervision assignments and their areas of expertise. The unit committed to correcting this through the recruitment of additional supervisors, particularly retired teachers, and by creating a distance-supervision model that pairs student teachers with aligned supervisors for content-specific feedback. Second, the team found no evidence of a clear process for evaluating adjunct faculty beyond student feedback forms. In response, the unit adopted a process requiring systematic adjunct observations by department chairs, with new adjuncts observed in their first semester and ongoing evaluation every third course offering. These steps formalize the evaluation process while maintaining regular communication and support for adjunct instructors.

Assessment Standard

The Assessment standard is considered met.

The review team commended the teacher preparation program for maintaining a strong candidate and program assessment system that supported continual improvement. The unit developed an extensive annual assessment data book that was used intentionally to guide program quality processes. Additionally, the team praised the principal preparation program for its ongoing candidate check-ins that provided meaningful and consistent feedback.

The team issued two recommendations. First, while the principal preparation program had an established assessment system, the team recommended refining its clarity and cohesiveness by developing shared rubrics. The program director responded by working with the instructional designer to embed rubrics aligned to each NELP standard within the learning management system, ensuring consistency in assessment and data tracking. Second, the team recommended that the unit continue developing inter-rater reliability processes for both the teacher and principal preparation programs. The unit committed to continuing this work during its annual summer assessment retreat.

No compliance concerns were identified.

Teacher Clinical Practice Standard

The Clinical standard is considered met.

The review team praised the unit for extending classroom-based opportunities by increasing the time candidates spend in PK-12 classrooms. Candidates not only engaged in traditional field experiences but also taught or co-taught lessons during methods courses, strengthening their preparation. The team also recognized the unit's commitment to international experiences by offering regular rotations in Belize and Liberia, with opportunities for student teaching abroad in locations such as Indonesia. These experiences demonstrated the unit's dedication to preparing candidates through unique and global teaching opportunities.

The team issued three recommendations. First, while placement records documented diverse settings, candidates were unable to consistently articulate their experiences with varying student populations. The team recommended integrating reflection questions into early practicum courses. The unit committed to embedding such questions into EDUC 101, 209 and 239 beginning in the 2025–2026 academic year. Second, the team found that some candidates experienced a gap in fieldwork during the junior year and recommended that the unit review clinical sequences across programs to minimize

these gaps. The unit agreed to address this as part of its 2025–2026 program goals. Third, the team noted that current methods of tracking candidates through program checkpoints were cumbersome and recommended adoption of a comprehensive data management system. The unit responded by piloting Tevera, a platform designed for education programs, to streamline assessment, field placement and portfolio management across undergraduate and graduate programs.

No compliance concerns were identified in this review.

Teacher Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions Standard

The Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions (KSD) standard is considered met.

The review team commended the unit for its work in embracing and aligning literacy curricula with the science of reading. Teacher candidates consistently noted they felt supported by faculty and received quality feedback that promoted continuous growth and development.

The team issued one recommendation. While classroom management was addressed in required and elective courses, students expressed a need for additional instruction and application of classroom management concepts throughout the program. The unit committed to reviewing and assessing classroom management topics in additional courses outside of Applied Educational Psychology, including considering whether EDUC 252: Introduction to Behavior Management should be required for all students. This goal will be addressed during the 2025–2026 academic year, with faculty implementing changes and reporting back to the Iowa Department of Education.

No compliance concerns were identified in this review.

Administrator Clinical Practice Standard

The Administrator Clinical standard is considered met.

The review team commended the unit for the thorough nature of its clinical experiences. Candidates had a clear understanding of expectations from the start of their program and received feedback from multiple mentors as well as the program director throughout the program. The team also noted the strong integration of NELP standards across all courses and clinical experiences. This intentional alignment, combined with reflective tasks, deepened learning for candidates.

No recommendations or compliance concerns were identified in this review.

Administrator Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions Standard

The Administrator KSD standard is considered met.

The unit was recognized for embedding NELP standards in its conceptual framework and for the program director's careful verification that all candidates completed milestones and met Board of Educational Examiners requirements prior to licensure recommendation.

One recommendation was issued. While the unit offered special optional webinars addressing relevant education issues and the needs of diverse learners, the team recommended including these webinars in courses and clinical experiences. The unit responded by committing to include a webinar in each of the four lab classes beginning in fall 2025, with students required to provide personal responses and connect the content to relevant NELP standards.

No compliance concerns were identified in this review.

Paraeducator Certificate (Generalist) Sunset

Dordt University has chosen to discontinue the program.

Dordt University Overview

Source: U.S. Department of Education Scorecard, Dordt University, Dordt University Institutional Report; 2024 Annual Report

General Information

Type:	Private Nonprofit
Size:	Small
Location:	Town
Awards Offered:	Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's

Cost

Avg. Annual Cost:	\$25,383 (midpoint for 4-yr schools is \$19,740/year)
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Acceptance Rate, Enrollment, Retention and Graduation Rate

Acceptance Rate:	71%
Enrollment:	1,547 undergraduate students
Retention Rate:	83% (% of students returning after the first year)
Graduation Rate:	72% (midpoint for 4-yr schools is 58%)

Student and Faculty Ratio

Student-to-Faculty Ratio:	14:1
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Programs and Endorsements Offered

Awards Offered:	Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's
Main Campus:	Sioux Center, IA
Alternative Paths:	N/A
Online Programs:	Master of Education

Education Programs

Elementary Education
Secondary Education
Administration

Endorsements Offered

- Birth-Grade 3 Inclusive Settings*
- PK-K: Prekindergarten-Kindergarten*
- K-6: Teacher Elementary Classroom*

- K-8: Art*, English/Language Arts*, Spanish*, Health*, Mathematics*, Music*, Physical Education*, Reading*, Science*, Speech, Social Studies*, Instructional Strategist 1: Mild & Moderate*, STEM*
- 5-8: Algebra for H.S. Credit, Middle School Language Arts*, Middle School Mathematics*, Middle School Science*, Middle School Social Studies*, STEM*
- 5-12: Agriculture, Art*, Business – All*, English/Language Arts*, Language Arts – All*, French*, Spanish*, Health*, Industrial Technology*, Mathematics*, Music*, Physical Education*, Biological Science*, Chemistry*, Earth Science*, Physics*, American Government, American History, Economics, Psychology, Sociology, World History, Speech, All Science*, All Social Science*, Social Sciences – Basic*, Instructional Strategist 1: Mild & Moderate*, Computer Science*, Engineering
- K-12: Coaching, English as a Second Language, Instructional Strategist II BD/LD*,
- PK-12: Principal/PK-12 Special Education Supervisor
- All: Instructional Strategist I and II*

*Designates a 2024-25 Iowa teacher shortage area

Partnerships

Dordt University educator preparation program partners with the following:

- Teacher Education Advisory Committee
- Educational Leadership Advisory Committee
- Content area faculty and chairs
- Thrive Center for Applied Behavior Analysis
- Thrive Center for Achievement
- K-12 community school districts

Program Initiatives

Dordt University initiatives reported from the 2024 Annual Report:

- New endorsements offered (computer science and special education)
- Exploring a possible secondary Master of Arts in Teaching graduate program
- Science of reading curricula alignment and updates
- Structured Literacy Tutoring Center
- Year-long student teaching through the Professional Development School program

Program Trends

A series of tables below provides an overview of program trends.

Program Enrollment

Table 1: Dordt University Education Enrollment

Semester	# FTE Candidates	# Graduates
Fall 2023	229	50
Fall 2022	108	44
Fall 2021	216	44
Fall 2020	223	45
Fall 2019	200	47

Source: Title II Reports

Program Completers

Table 2: Dordt University Teacher Program Completers

Academic Year	Early Childhood Only	Elementary Only	Secondary Only	Combined K-6 and 7-12	Total
2023-24	-	26	15	9	50
2022-23	-	20	9	16	45
2021-22	-	22	12	7	41
2020-21	-	25	11	9	45
2019-20	-	32	8	14	54

Source: Annual Reports

Table 3: Dordt University Administrator Program Completers

Academic Year	Principal
2023-24	20
2022-23	24
2021-22	27
2020-21	24
2019-20	20

Source: Annual Reports

Placement Rates

Table 4: Dordt University Teacher Placement Rates

Academic Year	# Graduates	# Teaching Jobs	# Grad School
2023-24	50	34	3
2022-23	45	37	5
2021-22	41	36	4
2020-21	45	44	1
2019-20	54	46	2

Source: Annual Reports

Table 5: Dordt University Administrator Placement Rates

Academic Year	# Graduates	# Administrator Jobs	# Grad School	# Other Area in Education
2023-24	20	12	-	7
2022-23	24	4	-	19
2021-22	27	27	-	-
2020-21	24	7	-	14
2019-20	20	8	2	2

Source: Annual Reports

Clinical Faculty, Adjunct and Cooperating Teacher Totals

Table 6: Dordt University Clinical Faculty, Adjuncts and Cooperating Teachers

Academic Year	# FT Faculty	# Adjunct Faculty	# Cooperating Teachers	# Candidates in a Supervised Clinical Experience
2023-24	15	5	230	189
2022-23	16.5	4	188	209
2021-22	16	5	95	47
2020-21	14.25	5	101	51
2019-20	19	89	83	47

Source: Title II Reports

Program Review Fast Facts

Duration

Self-Study/Process Review Meeting: November 1, 2022

Cohort Meetings: 2023-2024

Institutional Report Received: September 13, 2024

Preliminary Review: October 10, 2024

Program Response Received: December 16, 2024

Site Visit: January 19 – 22, 2025

Out Brief to Program: January 22, 2025

Draft Report: February 20, 2025

Review Team

Three Iowa Department of Education (Department) program consultants

Sixteen faculty from Iowa educator preparation programs with eight site visit volunteers and eight state panel volunteers, representing the following institutions:

- Iowa State University
- Upper Iowa University
- Northwestern College
- William Penn University
- Faith Baptist Bible College
- St. Ambrose University
- University of Northern Iowa
- Clarke University
- University of Dubuque
- Buena Vista University
- Luther College

Stakeholder Input

Surveys:

10-12 questions per survey

Includes short response, Likert scale and open-ended questions

Responses:

135 responses from the following stakeholders

Teacher Preparation:

Advisory Committee (8)

adjuncts (3)

alumni (29)
candidates (28)
cooperating teachers (14)
content area faculty (6)
supervisors (3)

Administrator Preparation:

Advisory Committee (4)
adjuncts (5)
alumni (16)
candidates (9)
supervisors/mentors (10)

Interviews:

Program overview presentation, program assessment presentation, individual faculty (10), classroom visits (6), content faculty, institutional administration (5), educator preparation administration/leadership (5), support staff (6) and student folder review

Class Visits: Variety of courses, grade levels, majors and endorsements including:

EDUC 135: Introduction to Educational Psychology (Level 1)
EDUC 353: Methods – Teaching STEM K-12 (Level 2)
EDUC 331: Teaching Social Studies Elementary/Middle School (Level 2)
EDUC 314: Diagnosis and Remediation of Language/Reading Difficulties (Level 2)
EDUC 203: Planning, Instruction and Assessment in Middle/Sec. Schools (Level 1)
Student Teaching Meeting (Level 3)

Continuous Improvement

Previous site visit concerns (2017-18) and correlations with the recent visit (2024-25)

Previous Site Visit Concerns and Correlations to Recent Review

1. Governance Standard

2017-18 Site Visit Concerns:

79.10(2) Governance of the principal preparation program does not meet the requirements to provide guidance and support for the program. The unit has made recent changes to the governance structure; however, the team requires the unit to document policies and positional authority to provide adequate governance for the principal preparation program.

79.10(5) The team finds evidence that there is not an active advisory committee that is involved semiannually in providing input for program evaluation and continuous improvement for either the teacher preparation or the school leadership programs. The team requires the unit to formally establish an external advisory committee and solicit their input at least two times per year to use

their expertise for continuing program improvement for the teacher and for the principal preparation programs.

2024-25 Site Visit Correlation: There is no correlation of findings from the previous review to the 2024-25 review.

2. Diversity Standard

2017-18 Site Visit Concerns:

None.

3. Faculty Standard

2017-18 Site Visit Concerns:

79.12(2) The team does not find evidence a faculty member's teaching assignment is aligned with qualifications:

A faculty member does not have evidence of experience or preparation in elementary education. The faculty member teaches the elementary component of the EDUC 265 - Content Area Reading Methods course. The team requires the unit to examine the qualifications of the faculty member to ensure the knowledge, preparation and experience match that of the course being taught.

79.12(5) The team does not find specific evidence of eight faculty members have engaged in 40 hours of team teaching in a P-12 setting in the past five years. The team requires the unit to implement a policy to ensure all faculty engage in 40 hours of team teaching over a 5-year period.

2024-25 Site Visit Correlation: There is a correlation of findings from the previous review to the 2024-25 review in regards to aligning faculty member's education and experience to teaching or supervision assignments.

4. Assessment Standard

2017-18 Site Visit Concerns:

79.13(1) The team was not able to find evidence of a clearly defined, cohesive assessment system in the Principal Preparation program. Interviews with the Director of Unit Assessment, Principal Preparation Program Faculty, Principal Preparation Program candidates as well as document review provide evidence of a loosely defined and implemented set of assessments. The program identifies the assessment system as an area that needs extensive refinement, and have expressed interest in developing an assessment system more tightly aligned with Iowa's Standards for School Leaders (ISSL) standards and integrated into coursework and field experiences. They recognized the need for a system that will provide useful information for feedback to candidates on their development in the ISSL as well as clear and useful information for unit assessment. The unit is required to develop and implement a clearly defined, cohesive assessment system that will effectively yield meaningful information for candidate assessment and unit evaluation.

2024-25 Site Visit Correlation: There is no correlation of findings from the previous review to the 2024-25 review.

5. Teacher Clinical Standard

2017-18 Site Visit Concerns:

79.14(4) The team finds that teacher candidates do not always experience clinical practices in multiple settings that include diverse groups and diverse learning needs. Diverse clinical opportunities are available in Sioux City and Sioux Falls but not all students are able to schedule these clinical experiences. The team requires the unit to examine and adjust the management of clinical placements to ensure all candidates experience clinical practices in diverse settings.

79.14(7) The team finds evidence that the student teaching experience for initial licensure does not include a full-time experience for a minimum of 14 consecutive weeks in duration during the teacher candidate's final year of the teacher preparation program. Students currently leave the classroom setting every other Friday to attend an on-campus teaching seminar for Educative Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA) preparation. In addition to being out of compliance, this practice is described by student teachers and cooperating teachers as being disruptive to the student teaching experience and the P-12 students. The team requires the unit to ensure all candidates complete at least 14 consecutive weeks of full-time student teaching.

2024-25 Site Visit Correlation: There is no correlation of findings from the previous review to the 2024-25 review.

6. Teacher Education Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions Standard

2017-18 Site Visit Concerns:

79.15(8) Curriculum exhibits have not yet been approved. The team requires the unit to gain approval of curriculum exhibits for all endorsements offered.

2024-25 Site Visit Correlation: There is no correlation of findings from the previous review to the 2024-25 review.

7. Administrator Clinical Standard

2017-18 Site Visit Concerns:

79.16(5) Evidence from interviews with cooperating administrators indicates the institution does not offer professional development for cooperating administrators to review the objectives of the field experience, review the responsibilities of the cooperating administrator, build skills in coaching and mentoring, or provide the cooperating administrator other information and assistance the institution deems necessary. The team requires the unit to develop and implement policy to provide professional development for cooperating administrators to collaborate in preparing candidates effectively.

2024-25 Site Visit Correlation: There is no correlation of findings from the previous review to the 2024-25 review.

8. Administrator Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions Standard

2017-18 Site Visit Concerns:

79.17(3) The team is concerned about how the program meets the needs of Iowa principal preparation candidates in a program that includes national and international students. For example, the Institutional Report identifies EDUC 504 as the course where the Iowa Core is identified. The course syllabus includes information on the common core, but does not include information about

the Iowa Core. This syllabus also includes National Board and Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards, but no ISSL standards. It is not clear how the unit meets Iowa candidate needs in coursework available to a broad group of candidates. The team requires the unit to clearly show coursework across the curriculum that specifically meets the needs of an Iowa principal license.

79.17(5) Curriculum exhibits have not yet been approved. The team requires the unit to gain approval of curriculum exhibits for all endorsements offered.

2024-25 Site Visit Correlation: There is no correlation of findings from the previous review to the 2024-25 review.

Full Initial Site Visit Report with Institution Responses

Dordt University

Team Report

Preliminary Review: October 10, 2024

Site Visit: January 19, 2025 through January 22, 2025

Final Report: February 20, 2025

Presented to the State Board of Education on: September 11, 2025

Iowa Department of Education

Site Visit Team Members

Dr. Stephanie TeKippe, Iowa Department of Education
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Ms. Dana Oswald, William Penn University
Dr. Gina Kuker, Upper Iowa University
Dr. Angila Moffitt, Northwestern College
Mr. Russell Adams, Northwestern College
Dr. Kenneth Hayes, University of Northern Iowa

Acknowledgements

Team members would like to express their gratitude to the Dordt University community for their hospitality and assistance in facilitating the team's work. The tasks associated with the review process necessitate intense focus by reviewers during a concentrated period of time. Everyone we encountered graciously responded to our questions and requests for materials. We interacted with a wide variety of individuals who demonstrated enthusiasm, professionalism and dedication to this program.

The team expresses its appreciation for the work of all involved with a special thank you to those whose roles were integral in the success of this visit, particularly Dr. Dave Mulder, Education Department Chair, Dordt University; Dr. Abby De Groot, Teacher Preparation Program Director, Dordt University; Dr. Matthew Beimers, M.Ed. Program Director, Director of School Leadership, Dordt University; and Mrs. Kay De Boom, Education Department Office Administrator, Dordt University.

GOVERNANCE AND RESOURCES STANDARD

281—79.10(256) *Governance and resources standard. Governance and resources adequately support the preparation of practitioner candidates to meet professional, state and institutional standards in accordance with the following provisions.*

79.10(1) *A clearly understood governance structure provides guidance and support for all educator preparation programs in the unit.*

79.10(2) *The professional education unit has primary responsibility for all educator preparation programs offered by the institution through any delivery model.*

79.10(3) *The unit's conceptual framework establishes the shared vision for the unit and provides the foundation for all components of the educator preparation programs.*

79.10(4) *The unit demonstrates alignment of unit standards with current national professional standards for educator preparation. Teacher preparation must align with InTASC standards. Leadership preparation programs must align with NELP standards.*

79.10(5) *The unit provides evidence of ongoing collaboration with appropriate stakeholders. There is an active advisory committee that is involved semiannually in providing input for program evaluation and continuous improvement.*

79.10(6) *When a unit is a part of a college or university, there is ongoing collaboration with the appropriate departments of the institution, especially regarding content knowledge.*

79.10(7) *The institution provides resources and support necessary for the delivery of quality preparation program(s). The resources and support include the following:*

a. *Financial resources; facilities; appropriate educational materials, equipment and library services; and commitment to a work climate, policies, and faculty/staff assignments which promote/support best practices in teaching, scholarship and service;*

b. *Resources to support professional development opportunities;*

c. *Resources to support technological and instructional needs to enhance candidate learning;*

d. *Resources to support quality clinical experiences for all educator candidates; and*

e. *Commitment of sufficient administrative, clerical, and technical staff.*

79.10(8) *The unit has a clearly articulated appeals process, aligned with the institutional policy, for decisions impacting candidates. This process is communicated to all candidates and faculty.*

79.10(9) *The use of part-time faculty and graduate students in teaching roles is purposeful and is managed to ensure integrity, quality, and continuity of all programs.*

79.10(10) *Resources are equitable for all program components, regardless of delivery model or location.*

Initial Team Findings - Governance and Resources

Commendations/Strengths

- The team commends the unit for providing additional resources and support to faculty and students in a variety of ways. The institution not only allocates funding and services to encourage professional development, but also furnishes a generous amount of scholarship funds for pursuing degrees in education.
- The team commends the exceptional cohesiveness of the teacher and administrative education program leadership, recognizing not only their strong and consistent collaborative approach but also their commitment to going above-and-beyond in fostering innovation, alignment and continuous improvement for the benefit of educators and students alike.

Recommendations

1. 79.10(7a) The team did not find evidence (through faculty and staff interviews) that a system of data collection for student checkpoints in the Master of Education (MEd) program exists. As the MEd program grows and to increase the efficiency of record-keeping alongside seamless data retrieval for the teacher and administrator programs, the team recommends that the unit acquires a data collection system to aid in the collection and analysis of student data.

Unit Response. The program is currently researching and developing a trial of Tevara, a data management system designed specifically for Education programs. This software will streamline assessment, practicum data and student portfolio work. This will stretch across both undergraduate and graduate programs.

2. 79.10(6)a The team found evidence of secondary methods content experts, at times, experiencing difficulty meeting the ten-student minimum standard. The team recommends the unit consult with administration to explore solutions for secondary faculty to offer and receive credit for upper-level methods courses that do not meet the minimum student enrollment.

Unit Response. While the credit-load policy related to class under-enrollment is unlikely to change, we did discuss content area methods instructors receiving a bump in their load credit for completing the 40-hour classroom requirement. While this is not a complete solution to the issue, it is progress in the right direction. Additionally, as we grow the Master of Arts in Teaching program starting next fall, we will continue exploring combining undergraduate and graduate methods courses so that enrollment may hit the minimum student requirement.

Concern

1. 79.10(7) The team found (through interviews, documents and surveys) that the MEd program director is responsible for all aspects of the program including curriculum development and supervision; clinical programming and supervision; and overall program quality and oversight. The team requires the unit to consider the workload capacity for this position to provide quality program delivery that is sustainable and develop a plan with timelines to provide administrative support.

Unit Response. A memo from the Dean of Social Sciences was received in response to the concern. A concise summary of the memo follows. The institution addressed concerns about the MEd Director's workload by holding meetings with Deans, the Education Department Chair and the Director to identify current and future administrative support needs. Additional support will come from existing departmental staff, the Office of Graduate and Online Programs and the anticipated hire of a Director of Graduate Admissions, who will assume some recruiting and travel duties. The Deans also committed to ongoing evaluation of workload, including periodic check-ins and adjustments to load credits. These collaborative efforts have strengthened mutual understanding and support between the MEd program and related offices.

Sources of Information

Interviews with:

President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean for Social Sciences, Dean for Online and Graduate Education, Education Department Chair, Teacher Education Program (TEP) Director, Master of Education Programs Director, Special Education Programs Director, Teacher Preparation Program Office Administrator, Director of Admissions

Review of:

Institutional Report, program response to the preliminary review, handbooks, faculty curriculum vitae, surveys, program opening presentation, assessment overview, advisory committee meeting minutes

DIVERSITY STANDARD

281–79.11(256) Diversity standard. *The environment and experiences provided for practitioner candidates support candidate growth in knowledge, skills, and dispositions to help all students learn in accordance with the following provisions.*

79.11(1) *The institution and unit work to establish a climate that promotes and supports diversity.*

79.11(2) *The institution's and unit's plans, policies, and practices document their efforts in establishing and maintaining a diverse faculty and student body.*

Initial Team Findings - Diversity

Commendations/Strengths

- The team recognizes the unit's commitment of resources in the program's offerings on and off campus through courses, field experiences and international opportunities. Diverse experiences for candidates are embedded into the unit culture. The efforts of the unit to provide a wide variety of experiences throughout all levels and for all candidates is to be commended.

Recommendations

None.

Concerns

None.

Sources of Information

Interviews with:

Education Department Chair, Teacher Preparation Program Director, Field Experience and Student Teaching Director, Field Experience Coordinator, unit faculty, candidates, alumni

Review of:

Institutional Report, program response to the preliminary review, student records, handbooks, surveys, course syllabi, program opening presentation

FACULTY STANDARD

281—79.12(256) Faculty standard. *Faculty qualifications and performance shall facilitate the professional development of practitioner candidates in accordance with the following provisions.*

79.12(1) *The unit defines the roles and requirements for faculty members by position. The unit describes how roles and requirements are determined.*

79.12(2) *The unit documents the alignment of teaching duties for each faculty member with that member's preparation, knowledge, experiences and skills.*

79.12(3) *The unit holds faculty members accountable for teaching prowess. This accountability includes evaluation and indicators for continuous improvement.*

79.12(4) *The unit holds faculty members accountable for professional growth to meet the academic needs of the unit.*

79.12(5) *Faculty members collaborate with:*

a. *Colleagues in the unit;*

b. *Colleagues across the institution;*

c. *Colleagues in PK-12 schools/agencies/learning settings. Faculty members engage in professional education and maintain ongoing involvement in activities in preschool and elementary, middle, or secondary schools. For faculty members engaged in teacher preparation, activities shall include at least 40 hours of teaching at the appropriate grade level(s) during a period not exceeding five years in duration.*

Initial Team Findings - Faculty

Commendations/Strengths

- In review of surveys, classroom visits and interviews with other stakeholders on campus, the faculty were consistently celebrated as a strength.
- The unit is commended for engaging in co-teaching, which takes effort and institutional commitment. Further, most faculty had detailed documentation of comprehensive efforts for engagement with the field.

Recommendation

1. 79.12(5)c The team did not find evidence of consistent application of the 40-hour log per year by all faculty members (through review of 40-hour logs, responses to the preliminary review report and interviews). The team recommends the unit establish a protocol for requiring eight hours per year, clarifying what types of experiences count toward the 40-hour requirement and encouraging faculty to have a variety of aligned experiences on their log.

Unit Response. The unit will consistently implement the following protocol every year to more clearly communicate and facilitate the 40-hour requirement:

- Send a memo to all program faculty (teacher preparation program and principal preparation program) every fall reminding them to log at least eight hours in K-12 classrooms over the coming academic year. This memo contains the state requirements and a link to the log documents. Memos were provided for review.
- Reply-all to the fall email at the end of the spring semester, reminding faculty to document their eight hours.
- In August, each director will check logs and follow up with individual faculty members who have not logged at least eight hours.

Concerns

1. 79.12(2) The team did not find evidence of teaching or supervision assignments aligning with faculty member's education, experience and area of expertise (through review of faculty curriculum, interviews with field experience and student teaching director). The team requires the unit to provide updated records and develop a plan to ensure future alignment for the following individuals:

- [Faculty 1] –secondary math experience; supervision alignment
- [Faculty 2] - art experience ([Faculty 2] will be leaving Dordt after the 2024-25 academic year)
- [Faculty 3] - elementary education experience
- [Faculty 4] - secondary history experience
- [Faculty 5] – supervision alignment
- [Faculty 6] – supervision alignment
- [Faculty 7] – supervision alignment

Unit Response. Each of these instances is a misalignment in student teaching supervision load with the faculty member's endorsement areas and grade levels. The unit commits, going forward, to aligning supervisors to student teachers that match their grade level and

endorsement areas. While this is challenging because of our large number of endorsement areas, we have taken the following steps:

1. Created a “Student Teacher Supervisor” job description for distribution in local schools, especially for retiring teachers. This step came at the recommendation of our Advisory Committee and has several retiring teachers this spring. This personal invitation for retiring teachers may increase our bank of supervisors and create endorsement and grade-level alignment.
2. For endorsement areas that are hard to align with local in-person supervisors for a variety of reasons, the unit has developed a distance-supervision protocol. In these cases, the student teacher would be assigned a local supervisor that may not align in endorsement areas/grade levels for four of the seven required classroom visits, to guide the student teacher through completing the student teaching requirements, provide classroom management and pedagogical support, give lesson feedback and respond to journals. For the other three required classroom visits, the student teacher will video a lesson, send it to a designated distance supervisor who holds aligning endorsements and receive content-specific feedback from the distance supervisor in writing. Within a week, the supervisor and student teacher will also hold a Zoom meeting for in-person feedback. The unit plans on utilizing Dordt alumni for this task.

2. 79.12(3) The team did not find evidence (through review of the Institutional Report, interviews with unit faculty and adjunct faculty) of a clearly implemented classroom evaluation process completed by the unit for adjunct faculty. The team requires the unit to develop and execute a formalized evaluation and communication process for regular adjunct classroom observations or other approaches to evaluation of instruction.

Unit Response. According to the Faculty Handbook (3.11.b), adjunct faculty are evaluated every semester through student responses to instruction forms. The Dean of the Social Sciences, evaluates those responses and follows up with adjuncts. Additionally, the Dean has requested that each department chair observe adjunct faculty and write up a summary of their assessment/observation. Going forward, the education chair will do this for every new adjunct faculty in their first semester and every third time they teach the course thereafter. The chair communicates regularly with adjunct faculty already via email and text and will continue that practice.

Sources of Information

Interviews with:

President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean for Social Sciences, Dean for Online and Graduate Education, Education Department Chair, Teacher Preparation Program Director, Field Experience and Student Teaching Director, Special Education Programs Director, Field Experience Coordinator, instructional design lead, unit faculty, Teacher Preparation Program Office Administrator, candidates, alumni

Review of:

Institutional Report, program response to the preliminary review, handbooks, faculty curriculum vitae, surveys, course syllabi, program opening presentation, assessment overview

ASSESSMENT STANDARD

281—79.13(256) Assessment system and unit evaluation standard. *The unit's assessment system shall appropriately monitor individual candidate performance and use that data in concert with other information to evaluate and improve the unit and its programs in accordance with the following provisions.*

79.13(1) *The unit has a clearly defined, cohesive assessment system.*

79.13(2) *The assessment system is based on unit standards.*

79.13(3) *The assessment system includes both individual candidate assessment and comprehensive unit assessment.*

79.13(4) *Candidate assessment includes clear criteria for:*

a. *Entrance into the program. If a unit chooses to use a preprofessional skills test from a nationally recognized testing service for admission into the program, the unit must report passing rates and remediation measures annually to the department.*

b. *Continuation in the program with clearly defined checkpoints/gates.*

c. *Admission to clinical experiences (for teacher education, this includes specific criteria for admission to student teaching).*

d. *Program completion (for teacher education, this includes testing described in Iowa Code section 256.16; see subrule 79.15(5) for required teacher candidate assessment).*

79.13(5) *Individual candidate assessment includes all of the following:*

a. *Measures used for candidate assessment are fair, reliable, and valid.*

b. *Candidates are assessed on their demonstration/attainment of unit standards.*

c. *Multiple measures are used for assessment of the candidate on each unit standard.*

d. *Candidates are assessed on unit standards at different developmental stages.*

e. *Candidates are provided with formative feedback on their progress toward attainment of unit standards.*

f. *Candidates use the provided formative assessment data to reflect upon and guide their development/growth toward attainment of unit standards.*

g. *Candidates are assessed at the same level of performance across programs.*

79.13(6) *Comprehensive unit assessment includes all of the following:*

a. *Individual candidate assessment data on unit standards, as described in subrule 79.13(5), are analyzed.*

b. *The aggregated assessment data are analyzed to evaluate programs.*

c. *Findings from the evaluation of aggregated assessment data are used to make program improvements.*

d. *Evaluation data are shared with stakeholders.*

e. *The collection, aggregation, analysis, and evaluation of assessment data described in this subrule take place on a regular cycle.*

79.13(7) *The unit shall conduct a survey of graduates and their employers to ensure that the graduates are well-prepared, and the data shall be used for program improvement.*

79.13(8) *The unit regularly reviews, evaluates, and revises the assessment system.*

79.13(9) *The unit annually reports to the department such data as is required by the state and federal governments.*

Initial Team Findings - Assessment

Commendations/Strengths

- The team commends the teacher preparation program for the strong candidate and program assessment system in place for continual program improvement.
- The unit has developed an extensive assessment data book annually that is utilized with intentionality for quality improvement processes.
- The continued check-ins with candidates that occur in the principal preparation program are to be commended due to the quality feedback that is regularly provided.

Recommendations

1. 79.13(1) The team found evidence of an assessment system in place for the principal preparation program. The team recommends continued work refining the clarity and cohesiveness of the system, including the development of shared rubrics.

Unit Response. The Principal Program Director has been working with the institution's instructional designer to include the rubric for each NELP standard aligned to cornerstone assessments in the Canvas Learning Management system. This step ensures that each artifact is assessed against the NELP Standard it is aligned to at the time of submission, and it also provides a way for the director to track and analyze data.

2. 79.13(5)a Through the Institutional Report and interviews, the team found that inter-rater reliability work was started the summer of 2024. The team recommends that the unit continue a process of inter-rater reliability strategies for both principal and teacher preparation.

Unit Response. The unit will continue this process at each annual summer assessment retreat.

Concerns

None.

Sources of Information

Interviews with:

Dean for Social Sciences, Teacher Preparation Program Director, Master of Education Programs Director, Special Education Program Director, Unit Faculty, Teacher Preparation Program Office Administrator, Registrar and Director of Institutional Research

Review of:

Institutional Report, program response to the preliminary review, student records, annual assessment books, yearly goals - August meetings, teacher preparation committee minutes, candidate portfolios, Canvas, celebration of learning (PPP), handbooks, surveys, course syllabi, program opening presentation, assessment overview, evaluation documents

TEACHER EDUCATION CLINICAL PRACTICE STANDARD

281—79.14(256) Teacher preparation clinical practice standard. *The unit and its school partners shall provide field experiences and student teaching opportunities that assist candidates in becoming successful teachers in accordance with the following provisions.*

79.14(1) *The unit ensures that clinical experiences occurring in all locations are well-sequenced, supervised by appropriately qualified personnel, monitored by the unit, and integrated into the unit standards. These expectations are shared with teacher candidates, college/university supervisors, and cooperating teachers.*

79.14(2) *PK-12 school partners and the unit share responsibility for selecting, preparing, evaluating, supporting, and retaining both:*

- a. *High-quality college/university supervisors, and*
- b. *High-quality cooperating teachers.*

79.14(3) *Cooperating teachers and college/university supervisors share responsibility for evaluating the teacher candidates' achievement of unit standards. Clinical experiences are structured to have multiple performance-based assessments at key points within the program to demonstrate candidates' attainment of unit standards.*

79.14(4) *Teacher candidates experience clinical practices in multiple settings that include diverse groups and diverse learning needs.*

79.14(5) *Teacher candidates admitted to a teacher preparation program must complete a minimum of 80 hours of pre-student teaching field experiences, with at least 10 hours occurring prior to acceptance into the program.*

79.14(6) *Pre-student teaching field experiences support learning in context and include all of the following:*

- a. *High-quality instructional programs for PK-12 students in a state-approved school or educational facility.*
- b. *Opportunities for teacher candidates to observe and be observed by others and to engage in discussion and reflection on clinical practice.*
- c. *The active engagement of teacher candidates in planning, instruction, and assessment.*

79.14(7) *The unit is responsible for ensuring that the student teaching experience for initial licensure:*

- a. *Includes a full-time experience for a minimum of 14 weeks in duration during the teacher candidate's final year of the teacher preparation program.*
- b. *Takes place in the classroom of a cooperating teacher who is appropriately licensed in the subject area and grade level endorsement for which the teacher candidate is being prepared.*
- c. *Includes prescribed minimum expectations and responsibilities, including ethical behavior, for the teacher candidate.*
- d. *Involves the teacher candidate in communication and interaction with parents or guardians of students in the teacher candidate's classroom.*
- e. *Requires the teacher candidate to become knowledgeable about the Iowa teaching standards and to experience a mock evaluation, which shall not be used as an assessment tool by the unit, performed by the cooperating teacher or a person who holds an Iowa evaluator license.*

f. Requires collaborative involvement of the teacher candidate, cooperating teacher, and college/university supervisor in candidate growth. This collaborative involvement includes biweekly supervisor observations with feedback.

g. Requires the teacher candidate to bear primary responsibility for planning, instruction, and assessment within the classroom for a minimum of two weeks (ten school days).

h. Includes a written evaluation procedure, after which the completed evaluation form is included in the teacher candidate's permanent record.

79.14(8) *The unit annually offers one or more workshops for cooperating teachers to define the objectives of the student teaching experience, review the responsibilities of the cooperating teacher, and provide the cooperating teacher other information and assistance the unit deems necessary. The duration of the workshop shall be equivalent to one day.*

79.14(9) *The institution enters into a written contract with the cooperating school or district providing clinical experiences, including field experiences and student teaching.*

Initial Team Findings - Clinical Practice

Commendations/Strengths

- The team commends the unit for increased time in PK-12 classrooms that faculty members provide for students to teach (or co-teach) lessons during methods courses in addition to their field experiences.
- The team commends the unit for providing international classroom experiences in Belize and Liberia on a rotation so candidates can plan accordingly. After participating in these experiences, candidates are eligible to student teach internationally in locations such as Indonesia.

Recommendations

1. 79.14(4) While the Excel spreadsheets document placements in varying settings, the team found students were unable to speak about their varying student populations within placements. The team recommends adding reflection questions in courses like EDUC 101 and EDUC 239 regarding their experiences with differing learners.

Unit Response. During our fall assessment retreat, we strategically pick annual goals and divide them among the faculty. That faculty team is then responsible for researching and deciding on action items to meet that goal in the coming academic year. In the summer of 2025, we will include this as annual program goal:

- Integrate reflection questions into EDUC 101, 209 and 239 practicum courses that help students document and reflect on the student population variances present in each of their practicum placements.

Then, a team will work on the goal throughout the 2025-2026 school year, implementing any changes or recommendations and reporting back to the Department.

2. 79.14(4) The team found (through classroom visits) that while students gain classroom experience early in the program some experience a gap during their junior year. The team recommends the unit review clinical sequences for all programs to reduce gaps.

Unit Response. During our fall assessment retreat, we strategically pick annual goals and divide them among the faculty. That faculty team is then responsible for researching and deciding on action items to meet that goal in the coming academic year. In the summer of 2025, we will include this as annual program goal:

- Review clinical sequences for gaps in practicum experiences, especially during students' junior year, and evaluate ways to reduce those gaps.

Then, a team will work on the goal throughout the 2025-2026 school year, implementing any changes or recommendations and reporting back to the Department.

3. 79.14(7) The team found faculty members and staff spend a significant amount of time tracking students through the different checkpoints. While documents were available, the process is rather cumbersome. The team recommends considering a program that would

provide an all-in-one educational management platform for tracking student data as the program continues to grow. (Note: 79.14(7) is a similar recommendation to Governance 79.10(7a).)

Unit Response. (This response is a duplicate of the response to the recommendation in Governance 79.10(7a). The program is currently researching and developing a trial of Tevara, a data management system designed specifically for Education programs. This software will streamline assessment, practicum data and student portfolio work. This will stretch across both undergraduate and graduate programs.

Concerns

None.

Sources of Information

Interviews with:

Education Department Chair, Teacher Preparation Program Director, Field Experience and Student Teaching Director, Field Experience Coordinator, unit faculty, teacher preparation program office administrator, candidates, alumni

Review of:

Institutional Report, program response to the preliminary review, student records, handbooks, faculty curriculum vitae, surveys, course syllabi, program opening presentation

TEACHER EDUCATION KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS STANDARD

281—79.15(256) Teacher candidate knowledge, skills and dispositions standard. *Teacher candidates demonstrate the content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to help all students learn in accordance with the following provisions.*

79.15(1) *Each teacher candidate demonstrates the acquisition of a core of liberal arts knowledge including but not limited to English composition, mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities.*

79.15(2) *Each teacher candidate receives dedicated coursework related to the study of human relations, cultural competency, and diverse learners, such that the candidate is prepared to work with students from diverse groups, as defined in rule 281—79.2(256). The unit shall provide evidence that teacher candidates develop the ability to identify and meet the needs of all learners, including:*

- a. *Students from diverse ethnic, racial and socioeconomic backgrounds.*
- b. *Students with disabilities. This will include preparation in developing and implementing individualized education programs and behavioral intervention plans, preparation for educating individuals in the least restrictive environment and identifying that environment, and strategies that address difficult and violent student behavior and improve academic engagement and achievement.*
- c. *Students who are struggling with literacy, including those with dyslexia.*
- d. *Students who are gifted and talented.*
- e. *English language learners.*
- f. *Students who may be at risk of not succeeding in school. This preparation will include classroom management addressing high-risk behaviors including, but not limited to, behaviors related to substance abuse.*

79.15(3) *Each teacher candidate demonstrates competency in literacy, to include reading theory, knowledge, strategies, and approaches; and integrating literacy instruction into content areas. The teacher candidate demonstrates competency in making appropriate accommodations for students who struggle with literacy. Demonstrated competency shall address the needs of all students, including but not limited to, students with disabilities; students who are at risk of academic failure; students who have been identified as gifted and talented or limited English proficient; and students with dyslexia, whether or not such students have been identified as children requiring special education under Iowa Code chapter 256B. Literacy instruction shall include evidence-based best practices, determined by research, including that identified by the Iowa reading research center.*

79.15(4) *Each unit defines unit standards (aligned with InTASC standards) and embeds them in courses and field experiences.*

79.15(5) *Each teacher candidate demonstrates competency in all of the following professional core curricula:*

- a. *Learner development. The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across*

- the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.*
- b. Learning differences. The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.*
 - c. Learning environments. The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.*
 - d. Content knowledge. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.*
 - e. Application of content. The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.*
 - f. Assessment. The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.*
 - g. Planning for instruction. The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.*
 - h. Instructional strategies. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.*
 - i. Professional learning and ethical practice. The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.*
 - j. Leadership and collaboration. The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.*
 - k. Technology. The teacher candidate effectively integrates technology into instruction to support student learning.*
 - l. Methods of teaching. The teacher candidate understands and uses methods of teaching that have an emphasis on the subject and grade-level endorsement desired.*

79.15(6) Assessment requirements.

- a. Each teacher candidate must either meet or exceed a score on subject assessments designed by a nationally recognized testing service that measure pedagogy and knowledge of at least one subject area as approved by the director of the department of education, or the teacher candidate must meet or exceed the equivalent of a score on an alternate assessment also approved by the director. That alternate assessment must be a valid and reliable subject-area-specific, performance-based assessment for preservice teacher candidates that is*

centered on student learning. The required passing score will be determined by the director using considerations described in Iowa Code section 256.16(1)“a”(2) as amended by 2019 Iowa Acts, Senate File 159, section 2. A candidate who successfully completes the practitioner preparation program as required under this subparagraph shall be deemed to have attained a passing score on the assessments administered under this subparagraph even if the department subsequently sets different minimum passing scores.

b. The director shall waive the assessment requirements in 79.15(6)“a” for not more than one year for a person who has completed the course requirements for an approved practitioner preparation program but attained an assessment score below the minimum passing scores set by the department for successful completion of the program under 79.15(6)“a.” The department shall forward to the BOEE the names of all candidates granted a waiver for consideration for a temporary license.

79.15(7) *Each teacher candidate must complete a 30-semester-hour teaching major which must minimally include the requirements for at least one of the basic endorsement areas, special education teaching endorsements, or secondary level occupational endorsements. Additionally, each elementary teacher candidate must also complete a field of specialization in a single discipline or a formal interdisciplinary program of at least 12 semester hours. Each teacher candidate meets all requirements established by the board of educational examiners for any endorsement for which the teacher candidate is recommended.*

79.15(8) *Each teacher candidate demonstrates competency in content coursework directly related to the Iowa Core.*

79.15(9) *Programs shall submit curriculum exhibit sheets for approval by the board of educational examiners and the department.*

Initial Team Findings - Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions

Commendations/Strengths

- The team commends the unit's work toward embracing and aligning literacy curricula with the science of reading.
- Teacher candidates noted they feel supported by faculty and continually receive quality feedback for continuous growth and development.

Recommendation

1. 79.10(2) The team found evidence (through the Institutional Report, review of syllabi and student interviews) that a classroom management course is required for all special education majors and an elective for the other education majors. Classroom management is addressed in applied psychology, which is a required course. Students voiced that they would benefit from additional implementation of teaching directly linked to classroom management throughout the entire program. The team recommends the unit consider opportunities to review and assess classroom management topics in additional courses.

Unit Response. During our fall assessment retreat, we strategically pick annual goals and divide them among the faculty. That faculty team is then responsible for researching and deciding on action items to meet that goal in the coming academic year. In the summer of 2025, we will include this as annual program goal:

- Review and assess classroom management topics in additional courses outside of Applied Educational Psychology, including whether to require EDUC 252: Introduction to Behavior Management for all students.

Then, a team will work on the goal throughout the 2025-2026 school year, implementing any changes or recommendations and reporting back to the Department.

Concerns

None.

Sources of Information

Interviews with:

Online and Graduate Education Dean, Education Department Chair, Teacher Preparation Program Director, Master of Education Programs Director, Field Experience Coordinator, candidates, unit faculty, Registrar and Director of Institutional Research

Review of:

Institutional Report, program response to the preliminary review, student records, handbooks, surveys, course syllabi, program opening presentation

ADMINISTRATOR PREPARATION CLINICAL PRACTICE

281–79.16(256) Administrator preparation clinical practice standard. The unit and its school partners shall provide clinical experiences that assist candidates in becoming successful school administrators in accordance with the following provisions.

79.16(1) The unit ensures that:

a. Principal candidates successfully complete clinical experiences that provide candidates with opportunities to synthesize and apply the knowledge and skills identified in subrule 79.17(2) in ways that approximate the full range of responsibilities required of building-level leaders and enable them to promote the current and future success and well-being of each student and adult in their school.

b. Superintendent candidates successfully complete clinical experiences that provide candidates opportunities to synthesize and apply the knowledge and skills identified in subrule 79.17(3) in ways that approximate the full range of responsibilities required of district-level leaders and enable them to promote the current and future success and well-being of each student and adult in their district.

79.16(2) The unit ensures that clinical experiences occurring in all locations are coherent, authentic, sustained, and purposeful opportunities that are monitored by the unit. These expectations are shared with candidates, supervisors and cooperating administrators.

79.16(3) Candidates are supervised by knowledgeable and qualified practitioners. The PK-12 school and the unit share responsibility for selecting, preparing, supporting, evaluating, and retaining both:

a. High-quality college/university supervisors, and

b. High-quality cooperating administrators.

79.16(4) Cooperating administrators and college/university supervisors share responsibility for evaluating the candidate's achievement of unit standards. Clinical experiences are structured to have multiple performance-based assessments at key points within the program to demonstrate candidates' attainment of unit standards.

79.16(5) Clinical experiences include all of the following criteria:

a. A minimum of 400 hours during the candidate's preparation program.

b. Take place with appropriately licensed cooperating administrators in state-approved schools or educational facilities.

c. Take place in multiple high-quality educational settings that include diverse populations and students of different age groups.

d. Include documented expectations and responsibilities for cooperating administrators, school districts, accredited nonpublic schools, or AEAs and for higher education supervising faculty members.

e. Provide opportunities for candidates to apply the knowledge, skills, and dispositions identified in subrules 79.17(2) and 79.17(3).

79.16(6) The institution annually delivers one or more professional development opportunities for cooperating administrators to define the objectives of the field experience, review the responsibilities of the cooperating administrator, build skills in coaching and mentoring, and provide the cooperating administrator other information and assistance the institution deems necessary. The professional development opportunities incorporate feedback from participants and utilize appropriate delivery strategies.

79.16(7) The institution shall enter into a written contract with the cooperating school districts that provide field experiences for administrator candidates.

Initial Team Findings - Administrator Clinical

Commendations/Strengths

- The thorough nature of the clinical experience is impressive. Candidates have a clear picture of expectations from the outset of their program and receive feedback from a variety of mentors, as well as the program director, throughout the program.
- The NELP Standards are clearly included in all courses and clinical experiences. The overt connection of the standards to the content and experiences is strong. This intentionality, coupled with the reflective nature of the tasks deepens the learning for the students.

Recommendations

None.

Concerns

None.

Sources of Information

Interviews with:

Dean for Social Sciences, Dean for Online and Graduate Education, Education Department Chair, Teacher Preparation Program Director, Field Experience and Student Teaching Director, Master of Education Programs Director, Special Education Programs Director, Field Experience Coordinator, Instructional Design Lead, unit faculty, Teacher Preparation Program Office Administrator, Registrar and Director of Institutional Research, Director of Admissions, candidates, alumni

Review of:

Institutional Report, program response to the preliminary review, handbooks, surveys, course syllabi, program opening presentation

ADMINISTRATOR KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS

281–79.17(256) Administrator knowledge, skills, and dispositions standard. Administrator candidates shall demonstrate the content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to help all students learn in accordance with the following provisions.

79.17(1) Each educational administrator program shall define program standards (aligned with current NELP standards) and embed them in coursework and clinical experiences at a level appropriate for a novice administrator.

79.17(2) Each principal candidate demonstrates the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to:

- a. Collaboratively lead, design, and implement a school mission, vision, and process for continuous improvement that reflects a core set of values and priorities that include data use, technology, equity, diversity, digital citizenship, and community. (Mission, Vision, and Improvement)*
- b. Advocate for ethical decisions and cultivate and enact professional norms. (Ethics and Professional Norms)*
- c. Develop and maintain a supportive, equitable, culturally responsive, and inclusive school culture. (Equity, Inclusiveness, and Cultural Responsiveness)*
- d. Evaluate, develop, and implement coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, data systems, supports, and assessment. (Learning and Instruction)*
- e. Strengthen student learning, support school improvement, and advocate for the needs of the school and community. (Community and External Leadership)*
- f. Improve management, communication, technology, school-level governance, and operation systems to develop and improve data-informed and equitable school resource plans and to apply laws, policies, and regulations. (Operations and Management)*
- g. Build the school's professional capacity, engage staff in the development of a collaborative professional culture, and improve systems of staff supervision, evaluation, support, and professional learning. (Building Professional Capacity)*

79.17(3) Each superintendent candidate demonstrates competency in all of the following professional core curricula:

- a. Collaboratively lead, design, and implement a district mission, vision, and process for continuous improvement that reflects a core set of values and priorities that include data use, technology, values, equity, diversity, digital citizenship, and community. (District Mission, Vision, and Improvement)*
- b. Advocate for ethical decisions and cultivate professional norms and culture. (Ethics and Professional Norms)*
- c. Develop and maintain a supportive, equitable, culturally responsive, and inclusive district culture. (Equity, Inclusiveness, and Cultural Responsiveness)*
- d. Evaluate, design, cultivate, and implement coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, data systems, supports, assessment, and instructional leadership. (Learning and Instruction)*
- e. Understand and engage families, communities, and other constituents in the work of schools and the district and to advocate for district, student, and community needs. (Community and External Leadership)*
- f. Develop, monitor, evaluate, and manage data-informed and equitable district systems for operations, resources, technology, and human capital management. (Operations and Management)*

g. Cultivate relationships, lead collaborative decision making and governance, and represent and advocate for district needs in broader policy conversations. (Policy, Governance, and Advocacy)

79.17(4) Each new administrator candidate successfully completes the appropriate evaluator training provided by a state-approved evaluator trainer.

79.17(5) Each administrator candidate demonstrates the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to support the implementation of the Iowa core.

79.17(6) Each administrator candidate demonstrates, within specific coursework and clinical experiences, the ability to develop and maintain a supportive, equitable, culturally responsive, and inclusive district culture with students and staff from diverse groups, as defined in rule 281—79.2(256). The unit shall provide evidence that administrator candidates develop the ability to meet the needs of all learners, as well as ensuring teachers meet the needs of diverse learners, including:

a. Students from diverse ethnic, racial and socioeconomic backgrounds.

b. Students with disabilities. This will include preparation in developing and implementing individualized education programs and behavioral intervention plans, preparation for educating individuals in the least restrictive environment and identifying that environment, and strategies that address difficult and violent student behavior and improve academic engagement and achievement.

c. Students who are struggling with literacy, including those with dyslexia.

d. Students who are gifted and talented.

e. English language learners.

f. Students who may be at risk of not succeeding in school. This preparation will include classroom management addressing high-risk behaviors including, but not limited to, behaviors related to substance abuse.

79.17(7) Each administrator candidate meets all requirements established by the board of educational examiners for any endorsement for which the candidate is recommended. Programs shall submit curriculum exhibit sheets for approval by the board of educational examiners and the department.

Initial Team Findings - Administrator Knowledge Skills and Dispositions

Commendation/Strength

- The team commends the unit for having NELP standards embedded in your conceptual framework, course content and clinical experiences.
- The team commends the unit for having the program director verify that candidates complete all program milestones and meet all requirements established by the Board of Educational Examiners for any endorsement prior to recommending licensure.

Recommendation

1. 79.17(6) From a review of the Institutional Report, course syllabi and an interview with the MEd programs director, the team recognized the extra effort made by Dordt University to address relevant education issues, specifically meeting unique needs for all learners, as they arise. This is evidenced by the special, optional, topic webinars offered by the principal preparation program. Currently, these webinars are recorded and sent to current students and alumni. The team recommends that the unit consider including these webinars in the courses and clinicals.

Unit Response. We will be including a webinar in each of the four lab classes, and students will be asked to provide a personal response while also making connections to relevant NELP standards. This will begin in fall 2025.

Concerns

None.

Sources of Information

Interviews with:

Master of Education Program Director; Dean for Online and Graduate Education

Review of:

Institutional Report, program response to the preliminary review, handbooks, faculty curriculum vitae, surveys, course syllabi, board of educational examiners website
