

# Iowa State Board of Education

## Executive Summary

April 16, 2026

**Agenda Item:** Morningside University Educator Preparation Progress Monitoring Update

**State Board Goal(s):** 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 Iowa Administrative Code chapter 281-79.

**Presenter(s):** Amy Mayer, Education Program Consultant  
Division of Teacher Quality and Innovation

**Attachment(s):** One

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the State Board hear and discuss this information.

**Background:** Morningside University in Sioux City, Iowa, offers traditional teacher preparation and teacher intern preparation programs. During a conditional approval phase, the program has provided evidence and documentation of concern resolution and ongoing compliance with the faculty standards.

# Educator Preparation Progress Monitoring Report

Morningside University

Conditional Approval: December 4, 2025

Conditional Progress Monitoring Update: April 16, 2026



Department of Education

State of Iowa

**Department of Education**  
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### **Morningside University Program Representative**

Dr. Kelly Chaney, School of Education Dean, Morningside University

## Executive Summary

### Conditional Approval

The Iowa State Board of Education (State Board) granted conditional approval for Morningside University's (Morningside) teacher and teacher intern preparation programs on December 4, 2025.

At that time, Morningside had demonstrated compliance with seven standards, while three remaining standards required formal resolution and additional time for the Iowa Department of Education (Department) to monitor resolution implementation. The Department provided Morningside with action steps to resolve the remaining concerns and a plan for targeted support and progress monitoring.

This update is the first of two progress monitoring reports requested by the State Board prior to a consideration for full program approval. The report examines resolution implementation and review for two faculty standards, both of which were identified to have correlations to Morningside's prior review.

### Progress Monitoring and Support

Through ongoing progress monitoring, the Department reviewed actions implemented by Morningside to strengthen policies, documentation systems and verification procedures related to faculty qualifications and ongoing engagement with PK–12 schools. Morningside established a comprehensive Faculty Status and Credentials Policy that defines expectations, communication, updated submission requirements and compliance monitoring for both standards under review. Evidence collected through progress monitoring meetings and documentation submitted found the successful use of the New Hire Verification of Faculty Qualifications Google Form to document and verify faculty preparation and experience. This system captures degree verification, licensure and certifications, alignment of experience with course content, professional development, scholarship and service activities and other indicators of expertise.

In addition, Morningside created a content area evaluator role to support supervision of teacher candidates when the assigned university supervisor's expertise does not fully align with the candidate's grade level or content area. Content evaluators collaborate with supervisors, conduct supplemental assessments and provide targeted feedback related to content instruction. Following the initial use of content area evaluators this fall, Morningside surveyed supervisors, evaluators and candidates who participated in the new collaboration effort. Feedback from all three perspectives indicated additional expertise from the content evaluator strengthened instructional feedback and support provided to the candidate. Additionally, suggestions for improving communication and documentation were immediately implemented to further develop the process this spring.

Progress monitoring also confirmed Morningside addressed individual compliance concerns through reassignment of courses and supervision responsibilities, separation of one faculty member from employment and the hiring or assignment of qualified faculty whose experience aligns with course content and candidate preparation. In several cases, content evaluators were assigned to provide specialized oversight for teacher candidates and documentation was provided verifying the qualifications of all newly assigned faculty. The Department was able to

review required documentation to confirm and resolve faculty engagement and alignment of preparation compliance issues for the five faculty members in the Concern Resolution Report.

Morningside has demonstrated successful resolution of both concerns and evidence of ongoing sustained compliance through progress monitoring. Updated documentation will be required during the one-year follow-up to reassess continued compliance.

It is recommended the Faculty standard be considered Met.

## Faculty Standard Documentation

### Timeline

Morningside Site Visit: October 14 - October 16, 2024

Draft Report Sent to Morningside: December 19, 2024

Additional Review of Intern Curriculum Requested by Morningside: January 15, 2025

Additional Review Responses Sent: February 10, 2025

Initial Responses Submitted: June 2, 2025

Request for Clarification of 20 Unresolved Items Sent: July 31, 2025

Second Round of Responses Submitted: September 30, 2025

Concern Resolution Report Sent to Morningside: October 16, 2025

State Board Decision – Conditional Approval: December 4, 2025

Progress Monitoring Plan Review; December 11, 2025

Progress Monitoring Meeting – Faculty Standards: January 26, 2026

Progress Monitoring Meeting – Faculty Evidence Review: March 5, 2026

**1. Original Concern - 79.12(5)c & 77.9(5)** Through review of the Institutional Report, program response to the Preliminary Review Report and faculty spreadsheet, the team did not find evidence of the unit tracking ongoing involvement (40 hours) for all faculty, to include appropriate co-teaching and engagement in PK-12 settings. The unit is required to submit documentation using a provided table for the faculty members.

### Steps taken by Morningside University to Address Concern and Progress Monitoring

#### 1. Faculty Status and Credentials Policy

- Requirement to maintain ongoing, meaningful involvement in PK-12 schools annually
- Defines five-year window expectations
- Defines details required for submission
- Defines activities that do not meet policy expectations
- Establishes procedure for regular update of submissions
- Establishes procedure for submission review and documentation update
- Revised faculty calling card document documentation and status tracking
- Establishes process for review and compliance check during annual evaluations
- Establishes action taken when faculty are out of compliance

#### 2. Policy communication to faculty

- At time of hire Faculty status and credentials policy
- Appointment letters for full time faculty, Service Agreements for part time faculty
- School of Education Faculty and Staff Handbook
- Email prompts at the end of each term
- Annual evaluation

#### 3. Documentation and status review of yearly teaching/co-teaching hours

- Faculty calling cards (faculty documentation record) track
  - Date of experience
  - School District

- School building
- Grade level
- Role in the classroom
- Description of experience or activity
- Name of cooperating or co-teacher
- Clocked hours
- Regular review determines status
  - Compliant – 40 qualifying hours documented
  - On Track – current submissions meet Morningside policy expectations
  - On Timeline – current submissions do not meet Morningside expectations.
  - A timeline for successful completion contract signed by faculty, supervisor and Dean is completed

#### 4. Faculty with unresolved compliance concerns

- Faculty A
  - Submitted 16 additional hours to come into compliance
  - Has completed an additional 8 hours to remain on track with policy expectations
- Faculty B
  - separated from employment
  - not eligible for rehire without completed hour documentation

### **Progress Monitoring Evidence**

1. Faculty Status and Credentials Policy
2. Sample emails from winter 2025 and spring 2026 documenting regular calls for submission of completed hours Faculty Status and Credentials Policy
3. Updated calling cards (faculty documentation record) for faculty, university supervisors and content evaluators
4. Examples of timeline for successful completion plans for identified faculty

**Outcome - 79.12(5)c & 77.9(5) are considered resolved.**

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**2. Original Concern - 79.12(2) & 77.9(2)** Through review of faculty curriculum vitae and provided information, the team did not find evidence of appropriate qualifications for all adjunct faculty members that aligns with their teaching assignment. The team requires the unit to provide a clear record to ensure faculty qualifications align to the teaching assignments; please use the provided table to document alignment of faculty preparation, skills and experience with their teaching assignment.

### **Steps taken by Morningside University to Address Concern and Progress Monitoring**

1. Faculty status and credentials policy
  - All newly hired full time and part time faculty required to submit Faculty Status and Credentials Form
  - Sign a statement of understanding to update status annually
  - Establishes process for review and compliance check during annual evaluations
  - Establishes action taken when faculty are out of compliance
  - Documents communication of policy to all faculty

## 2. New Hire Verification of Faculty Qualifications

- Google Form created to establish new hire credentials
  - Degree review and verification
  - Experience aligned with course content
  - Teaching license and certifications
  - Documentation of professional development activities
  - Honors and Awards
  - Publications, presentations, leadership, grant writing experience
  - Service activities
  - Curriculum development involvement
- Identifies coursework faculty member is eligible to teach based on preparation and experience.

## 3. Faculty Records Documentation

- Revised calling card structure, snapshot of faculty background, qualifications, experience, licensure and teaching assignments
- New hire verification form responses populate the calling card
- Faculty calling cards updated on a regular basis

## 4. Content Evaluator Position Created

- Policy created to guide decision making for supervision of student teachers and teacher interns
- Establishes procedure when the university supervisor's preparation and experience does not align with the grade level and content area in which the teacher candidate is being prepared
- When needed a content area evaluator is also assigned
  - Works in collaboration with university supervisor
  - Provides specific feedback on instruction and application of content knowledge
  - Conducts at least two supplemental assessments per term
- Stakeholder feedback
  - Candidates appreciated the additional support and targeted content coaching discussions
  - Supervisors noted content experts provided a helpful layer of support
  - Suggested revisions for document logistics, rubric interpretation, and training
  - Revisions implemented for Spring 2026

## 5. Faculty with Unresolved Compliance Concerns

- Faculty A
  - Separated from employment
  - Reassignment evidence provided for SPED 595
  - Documentation for new faculty confirms experience and preparation that aligns with teaching and supervision of special education teacher candidates
- Faculty B
  - Content Area Evaluator assigned for supervision of two art teacher candidates.
  - Documentation provided for content evaluator confirms experience and preparation that aligns with supervisions of art teacher candidates.

- Reassignment evidence provided for EDUC 427, SPED 470 and SPED 471
- Documentation provided for new faculty confirms experience and preparation that aligns with teaching and supervision of art and special education teacher candidates.
- Faculty C
  - Reassignment evidence provided for five STEM courses.
  - Documentation provided for new faculty confirms experience and preparation that aligns with teaching and supervision of STEM coursework.
- Faculty D
  - Reassignment evidence provided for EDUC 313, EDUC 761 and EDUC 767.
  - Documentation provided for three new faculty confirms experience and preparation that aligns with teaching and supervision in literacy.
  - Teacher of record assigned for EDUC 767 for Spring and Summer 2026. The course will be discontinued.
  - Documentation provided for the teacher of record confirms experience and preparation that aligns with teaching and supervision in literacy.

### **Progress Monitoring Evidence**

1. Faculty Status and Credentials Policy
2. Verification of Faculty Qualifications Google Form
3. Sample of completed new hire form and rubric
4. Selected examples of faculty calling cards for faculty, university supervisors, and content evaluators
5. Policy for Assignment of University Supervisors
6. Summary of the Content Area Evaluator implementation

**Outcome - 79.12(2) & 77.9(2) are considered resolved.**

## Prior Concern Correlations

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

### Previous Site Visit Concerns and Correlations to Recent Review

#### 3. Faculty

##### 2017-18 Site Concerns

**1. 79.12(2)** The team does not find evidence that all part time faculty members in the graduate program are qualified for their teaching assignments. In particular:

- Faculty A's teaching experience has been exclusively at faith-based schools, she has her MAT from Morningside, and is teaching a graduate level class on diversity.
- Faculty B is supervising graduate English as a Second Language (ESL) internships for both elementary and secondary, but has no evidence of teaching experience with ESL, and the bulk of her teaching experience is at the PreK-8<sup>th</sup> grade levels.

The team requires the unit to document a clear policy and process for examination of all faculty qualifications aligned with teaching assignments.

**2. 79.12(2)** The LAC/ALAC positions are designed to provide oversight for instruction in online courses in the graduate program. The persons in these positions are responsible to oversee instruction in a variety of courses in varied endorsement areas. Because of the distribution of oversight work, persons in LAC/ALAC positions have oversight over content they are not qualified to teach. The team requires the unit to examine all faculty qualifications, including LAC/ALAC, and develop a sustainable policy to ensure faculty have knowledge preparation and experience aligned with the teaching/oversight assignments.

##### 2024-25 Site Visit Correlations

A comparison of the faculty-related compliance concerns shows persistent correlations in the areas of faculty qualifications and teaching assignment alignment. The unit continues to lack a comprehensive and sustainable system for verifying that all faculty, particularly adjuncts and those with supervisory responsibilities, possess appropriate qualifications aligned with their teaching assignments.

Additionally, the unit has not consistently monitored or documented faculty fulfillment of the required 40 hours of co-teaching. These recurring findings indicate the need for immediate and systemic improvement in faculty credential management, policy enforcement and oversight to ensure compliance and instructional quality.

**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

### Recommendations

1. 79.12(1) During interviews and survey review, the team learned Academic Coordinators are intended to ensure courses are equitable and consistent across modalities, however the function of the academic coordinator is not always clear. The team recommends the unit define and communicate the role of the Academic Coordinators and ensure the responsibilities are consistently fulfilled.

### Unit Response:

In response to the recommendation that the unit define and communicate the role of Academic Coordinators and ensure responsibilities are consistently fulfilled, the unit plans to proceed as follows:

1. Continue to develop and strengthen the existing operational structure where Academic Coordinators serve as course authors and report to assigned Program Coordinators, which is explicit in the Service Agreement. Morningside will continue the practice of requiring Academic Coordinators to sign a form acknowledging the terms and conditions of their Service Agreement.
2. Academic Coordinators will continue to be required to attend monthly meetings with their team every term and complete required course readiness checklists and the continuous course improvement logs.
3. Academic Coordinators will be encouraged to participate in dedicated professional development sessions delivered by the Instructional Support Team based on needs expressed by Academic Coordinators, Program Coordinators or the Instructional Support Team.
4. Academic Coordinators will be required to participate in the improved annual evaluation system (using the new platform, Perform Yard) to foster understanding, growth and development.
5. In addition to routine communication from their Program Coordinators, the unit will distribute a newsletter to Academic Coordinators each term.

Links to evidence provided to the Department

### Concerns

**1. 79.12(5)c & 77.9(5)** Through review of the Institutional Report, program response to the Preliminary Review Report and faculty spreadsheet, the team did not find evidence of the unit tracking ongoing involvement (40 hours) for all faculty, to include appropriate co-teaching and engagement in PK-12 settings. The unit is required to submit documentation using a provided table for the faculty members.

### Unit Response:

Links to evidence of 40-hour compliance provided to the Department.

The unit has developed and implemented a clear policy that requires all faculty in educator preparation to meet the requirements of this sub rule. The details of the policy and evidence provided are listed below.

### Description of Policy

All Sharon Walker SOE full time and part time faculty who teach courses that meet Iowa endorsement requirements must submit a current CV each year, and must maintain ongoing, meaningful involvement in P-12 schools annually. Furthermore, faculty must have a minimum of 40 hours of classroom experience within a 5-year period in order for the SOE to be in compliance with Iowa's Faculty Standard requirement (Ch. 79.12(5)(c.)).

### Criteria for 40 hours of Classroom Experience

Morningside defines the 5-year period as beginning 5 years prior to the completion of this form. For example, if this form is completed in June 2015, any classroom experiences dating back to June 2010 may be submitted. All faculty must submit very explicit and detailed information about classroom experiences. For example, for substitute teaching, the exact grade level, name of school, district, etc., must be listed. Furthermore, in order for those contact hours to be considered "compliant," they must match the areas and grade level in which they are assigned to teach or supervise at Morningside.

### Procedure for Regular Review of Faculty Credentials

1. All newly hired full time and part time faculty must submit the Faculty Credentials and Status Form upon hire and sign a Statement of Understanding, acknowledging the obligation to submit the status form annually.
2. Each eight-week term, the SOE Central Operations team prompts all currently assigned full time and part time faculty to submit an updated Faculty Credential and Status Form within 30 days of the initial request.
3. The SOE's Unit Records Manager, reviews the submissions using the Faculty Credential tracking system, to ensure that the faculty have current and appropriate records on file with the SOE.
4. Program coordinators, department heads, and Directors review faculty credentials during the annual evaluations of their faculty and part time faculty members to ensure compliance. Faculty who have not made progress in completing contact hours will be asked to submit a detailed plan describing a timeline for completion. The Dean will be notified of failure to comply on an ongoing basis.

### Failure to Comply with the Faculty Credentials and Status Policy

All faculty who fail to comply annually with this policy will be subject to disciplinary action that may include termination. Faculty who fail to complete ongoing classroom experience may also be required to submit a detailed plan describing a timeline for completing contact hours each year to ensure that 40 hours are met within a five-year period.

### Communication of Faculty Credentials and Status Policy

Compliance with this policy is a condition of employment for full time and part time faculty in the Sharon Walker SOE at Morningside University. Faculty are informed of the policy as follows:

1. At the time of hire, as evidenced by the signed Statement of Understanding document.
2. As noted in appointment letters for full time faculty and in Service Agreements for part time faculty.
3. The SOE Faculty and Staff Handbook and the SOE unit resource Google site (a repository of handbooks, forms, resources, etc. for internal use by SOE faculty and staff) will be updated to reflect these policies.

4. As a preface in the email that prompts faculty to complete the Faculty Credentials and Status Form each term.

The unit has required all faculty who still teach and will regularly teach for Morningside to complete the required hours to come into compliance. Each faculty member has a notation that indicates one of the following actions have been taken to bring the faculty member into compliance: a) completion of required hours, b) a detailed plan describing a timeline for completing contact hours each year to ensure that 40 hours are met within a five-year period, or c) the faculty member has separated from the university.

**2. 79.12(2) & 77.9(2)** Through review of faculty curriculum vitae and provided information, the team did not find evidence of appropriate qualifications for all adjunct faculty members that aligns with their teaching assignment. The team requires the unit to provide a clear record to ensure faculty qualifications align to the teaching assignments; please use the provided table to document alignment of faculty preparation, skills and experience with their teaching assignment.

### **Unit Response:**

Following is a summary of review of faculty qualifications and teaching assignments for the faculty identified in this concern.

Links to evidence of faculty qualifications provided to the Department.

1. Faculty E's information has been added to the Alignment Tab of the Morningside Faculty Review-August 2025 response spreadsheet.
2. Documentation of alignment for those instructors to begin Fall 2025 has been updated on the alignment tab of the Morningside Faculty Review-August 2025 response. Actions taken include: evidence of appropriate qualifications, reassignment of teaching duties or the faculty member has separated from the university.
3. A policy for hiring faculty is displayed below. This policy has been communicated in writing to all Directors, department heads and Program Coordinators and will appear in the Faculty and Staff Handbook and on the SOE unit resources Google site.

### Part Time Faculty Hiring Policy

Directors, department heads, and Program Coordinators are responsible for recruiting and recommending for hire qualified part time faculty. The following policy shall guide this process.

1. At the point of application and prior to conducting a formal interview, the candidate must complete the Faculty Status and Credentials (FCS) form.
2. The Director, department head or program coordinator reviews the FSC form to ensure all components are completed and the candidate has uploaded a current curriculum vitae, a copy of teaching licenses and unofficial transcript.
3. The Director, department head or program coordinator may then invite the candidate for an interview.
4. To recommend a candidate for hire, the Director, department head, or program coordinator must complete the Request for Hire form and the Verification of Faculty Qualifications form, providing explicit evidence of the candidate's qualifications for specific teaching assignments with regard to the candidate's credentials and experience. (This information will be exported to the faculty alignment spreadsheet.)
5. The Request to Hire form is processed by the Senior Administrative Coordinator.

6. The Request to Hire form and the Verification of Faculty Qualifications form are presented to the Dean for final approval and assignment of compensation.
  7. The Director, department head and Program Coordinators are responsible for verifying part time faculty's credentials to ensure they are appropriately aligned with teaching assignments before submitting instructor assignments on the master course list.
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### **Sources of Information**

Interviews with:

School of Education Dean, Department Head for Curriculum and Assessment, Director of Operations and Recommending Official, Director of Instructional Design, Program Coordinator for Undergraduate Programs, Program Coordinator for Graduate Advanced Practice Programs, Senior Administrative Coordinator, Academic Coordinators, student teacher candidates, classroom visits with current candidates, Unit Faculty, Placement Coordinator

Review of:

Institutional Report, program response to the Preliminary Review, student records, surveys, course syllabi, program opening presentation

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