



SHEPHERD
UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Demonstrating Completer Effectiveness

Shepherd University Educator Preparation Program

CAEP R4.1

Demonstrating Completer Effectiveness

Shepherd University's
Educator Preparation Program
Focus Group Mixed Methods
Accreditation Research Proposal
2025 - 2026

Introduction

- **MISSION:** The Shepherd University Educator Preparation Program (EPP) utilizes data-driven instruction to prepare reflective, effective, and socially responsible teachers to meet the diverse needs of P-12 students. Rooted in learning, engagement, integrity, accessibility, service, and community, we cultivate innovative educators who apply research-based strategies, foster inclusive learning environments, and promote success for all students. Through rigorous coursework and immersive field experiences with community partners, we prepare our teacher candidates to be empowered educators who seek continuous improvement and lead in dynamic educational settings.
- **PURPOSE:** The Educator Preparation Program (EPP) at Shepherd University must ensure that program completers effectively “contribute to P-12 student-learning growth” upon completion. The EPP must also demonstrate their completers’ mastery of applying “in P-12 classrooms the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions that the preparation experiences were designed to achieve.” Finally, the EPP must include within their demonstration of such contributions and applications “the rationale for the data elements provided” (CAEP, 2022).

Research Objective

- “To demonstrate that program completers effectively contribute to P-12 student-learning growth and apply in P-12 classrooms the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions developed during their time in the EPP” (CAEP R4.1, 2022).

Research Questions

- How do EPP completers impact P-12 student learning outcomes?
- In what ways do completers apply their professional training in real-world classrooms?
- What evidence supports their effectiveness?

Methodology

- Participants: Recent program completers (e.g., last 3 years)
 - Per CAEP, “completers” for R4.1 = Certified teachers / must have been working at least 6 months in teaching position related to program from which they graduated (Boardman & Hebert, 2023).
 - Goal: Same participants x3 years (if majority of programs represented + participant buy-in) OR different groups of participants to represent all programs across 3 years (Boardman & Hebert, 2023).
- Data Sources: Student growth data (de-identified / raw data), classroom observations/evaluations, employer evaluations, surveys/focus group interviews (Rigler, 2023).
- Analysis: Mixed methods (quantitative + qualitative) (Rigler, 2023).

Data Collection Tools

- Completer Standardized Testing Data (De-identified)
 - x2 or more years
- Completer Observation
 - Employer Observation Data
 - Completer University Supervisor Observation and Evaluation via STOT
 - ALTERNATIVE: Completer P-12 Supervisor Observation and Evaluation via STOT (e.g., principal, superintendent, etc.)
- Completer Focus Group Surveys + Interviews (Rigler, 2023)

Expected Outcomes

- Evidence of positive student learning growth
- Alignment between EPP practices/training and P-12 classroom practice
- Areas for EPP continuous improvement

Significance

- Inform EPP overall program refinement as well as individual specialized program improvements
- Support accreditation reporting
- Build stakeholder confidence

Limitations & Considerations

- Access to longitudinal data
- Variability in school and/or individual classroom contexts
- Response rates from completers/supervisors

Timeline

- Planning
 - Two (2) months for initial planning and recruiting participants with anticipated start date of initial meeting with participants in Nov / Dec 2025; initial data collection activities to commence in January 2026; and 1st Focus Group to finalize data collection in Spring 2026 (no later than May-June).
- Data Collection
 - Beginning Spring 2026 (one complete cycle before stipulation visit in Fall 2026).
- Analysis
 - Qualitative analysis for Surveys/Focus Group interviews to determine common themes among participants (Rigler, 2023).
 - Quantitative analysis will include de-identified / raw data Standardized Test Scores from individual participant's classes to identify any statistical significances that arise to help determine positive outcomes in P-12 learning in individual classrooms as well as across EPP / throughout various individual programs as represented (Rigler, 2023).
 - Mixed methods analysis will also include data from completer evaluations (e.g., employer and STOT data).
- Reporting
 - To EPPC, EPPAC, WVDE, and CAEP as needed throughout process.
- Estimated completion dates
 - Ongoing throughout CAEP cycle.
 - Each semester will result in one cycle of data collection / analysis / reporting.

References

- Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (2022). *CAEP Initial-Licensure Level Standards*. Retrieved from <https://caepnet.org/caep-standards/>
- Boardman, S., & Hebert, D. (2023, September 22-23). *Session 4 Standards R4 and R4A* [Conference session]. CAEPCon. Leesburg, VA, United States.
- Rigler, K. (2023, September 22-23). *Session 6 A Focus Group Approach to Completer Effectiveness R4* [Conference session]. CAEPCon. Leesburg, VA, United States.