

**Definitions of At-Risk of Becoming Low-Performing and Low-Performing Institutions of  
Higher Education in Virginia  
As Required by Title II of the Higher Education Act (HEA)**

**Background Information:**

In October 1998, the U.S. Congress enacted Title II provisions to the Higher Education Act (HEA) authorizing federal grant programs to improve the recruitment, retention, preparation, and support of new teachers. Title II also included accountability measures in the form of reporting requirements for institutions and states on teacher preparation and licensing.

Section 207 of Title II reporting requirements mandates that the U.S. Secretary of Education collect data on standards for teacher certification and licensure, as well as data on the performance of teacher preparation programs. The law requires the Secretary to use these data in submitting its annual report on the quality of teacher preparation to Congress. In addition, states were required to develop criteria, procedures, and processes from which institutions at-risk of becoming low-performing and low-performing institutions could be identified.

The following statement is an excerpt from the Title II “Reference and Reporting Guide for Preparing State and Institutional Reports on the Quality of Teacher Preparation,” April 19, 2000:

*To receive funds under this act, a state, not later than two years after the date of Enactment of the Higher Education Amendments of 1998, shall have in place A procedure to identify, and assist, through the provision of technical assistance, low-performing programs of teacher preparation within institutions of higher education. Such state shall provide the U.S. Secretary an annual list of such low-performing institutions that includes an identification of those institutions at-risk of being placed on such list. Such levels of performance shall be determined solely by the state and may include criteria based upon information collected pursuant to this title. Such assessment shall be described in the report under section 207(b).*

On September 26, 2001, the Board of Education approved Virginia’s definitions for low-performing and at-risk of becoming low-performing institutions of higher education with teacher preparation programs, beginning with approved program reviews on July 1, 2003. The designations of “approval, approval with stipulations, and denial of accreditation” were used in these definitions.

The *Regulations Governing the Review and Approval of Education Programs in Virginia*, effective September 21, 2007, define the standards that must be met and the review options available for the accreditation of professional education programs required. The new regulations separate the accreditation and program approval processes; therefore, the designations needed to be revised to reflect the designations used by each of the accrediting bodies. The Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure (ABTEL) supported revisions to align the definitions to the accrediting bodies’ designations at its January 2008 meeting. During its meeting on September 15, 2008, the ABTEL unanimously recommended that the Board of Education approve the

revised definitions of at-risk of becoming low-performing and low-performing institutions of higher education in Virginia. The revised definitions were approved by the Virginia Board of Education at its November 20, 2008, meeting.

### **Options for Accreditation**

The three options for accreditation are as follows:

- Option I: National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)
- Option II: Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC)
- Option III: Board of Education (BOE) Approved Accreditation Process

Each accreditation review results in one of the following decisions:

#### **Option I: National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education:**

##### *Accreditation Decisions After the First Visit:*

- Accreditation
- Provisional Accreditation
- Denial of Accreditation
- Revocation of Accreditation

##### *Continuing Accreditation Decisions:*

- Continuing Accreditation
- Accreditation with Conditions
- Accreditation with Probation
- Revocation of Accreditation

#### **Option II: Teacher Education Accreditation Council:**

- Accreditation
- Provisional Accreditation
- Accreditation Denied

[An institution also may be initially awarded “preaccreditation” on a one-time basis.]

#### **Option III: Board of Education Approved Accreditation Process:**

- Accredited
- Accredited with Stipulations
- Accreditation Denied

## **Definitions of At-Risk of Becoming Low-Performing and Low-Performing Institutions of Higher Education in Virginia**

The following definitions of at-risk of becoming low-performing and low-performing institutions of higher education in Virginia as required by the 1998 Title II HEA provisions were approved by the Virginia Board of Education at its November 20, 2008, meeting .

**At-Risk of Becoming Low-Performing Institution of Higher Education:** At-risk of becoming a low-performing institution of higher education means an institution with teacher preparation programs that receives one of the following designations from the accreditation review:

NCATE:	<i>Accreditation after First Visit:</i> Provisional Accreditation <i>Continuing Accreditation:</i> Accreditation with Probation
TEAC:	Provisional Accreditation
BOE:	Accredited with Stipulations

**Low-Performing Institution of Higher Education:** Low-performing institution of higher education means an institution with teacher preparation programs that has not made improvements by the end of the period designated by the accreditation body or not later than two years after receiving the designation of at-risk of becoming a low-performing institution of higher education.

When an institution receives one of the following designations, the low-performing designation will be removed:

NCATE:	Accreditation, Continuing Accreditation, or Accredited with Conditions
TEAC:	Accreditation
BOE:	Accredited

If an institution's accreditation is revoked or denied, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) will be notified for appropriate action. The *Regulations Governing the Review and Approval of Education Programs in Virginia*, (8VAC20-542-20), effective September 21, 2007, stipulate that "If a professional education program fails to maintain accreditation, enrolled candidates shall be permitted to complete their programs of study. Professional education programs shall not admit new candidates. Candidates shall be notified of program approval status."