

**To:** Sharon Robinson  
President, AACTE  
  
Mark Ginsberg  
Chair, AACTE Board of Directors

**From:** Mary Brabeck  
Chair, CAEP Board of Directors

**CC:** Chris Koch  
Vice Chair, CAEP Board of Directors  
  
James G. Cibulka  
President, CAEP

**Date:** April 16, 2015

**RE:** Open Letter to AACTE Board of Directors

I am writing in response to your recent blog (<http://edprepmatters.net/2015/04/update-aacte-board-resolution/>) posted on the AACTE website. You invite CAEP to join a subcommittee to work to:

- Focus on a **commitment** to accreditation, with CAEP as the single accrediting body.
- Advocate for accreditation processes as the cornerstone of **quality** within the profession.
- Advocate for **standards** as guides for the field that are enacted locally and measured contextually.

I encourage AACTE to reaffirm publically its strong stance in support of the standards as you did in the recent past: <http://aacte.org/news-room/13-press-releases-statements/154-aacte-celebrates-approval-of-new-professional-accreditation-standards> Yes, we must “Focus on a **commitment** to accreditation, with CAEP as the single accrediting body.” And it would be wonderful if AACTE were to “Advocate for accreditation processes as the cornerstone of **quality** within the profession.” Will you support national accreditation as a requisite for joining AACTE?

I agree that CAEP must engage in ongoing communication with the field and I welcome your invitation to dialogue. However, that is not the same thing as reviewing the standards with an eye toward revisions. We must not retreat from our conviction to reform teacher education through rigorous standards set by the profession. I hope that you, as President and Chair of AACTE, will make it clear to the public and the profession that it is not your intention or purview to re-litigate the standards we have all worked so hard to develop.

AACTE is an important source of support and assistance to providers who are working hard to meet the high standards CAEP has set. The role AACTE can play in supporting and advocating for colleges, schools, and departments of education that prepare teachers is valuable to the profession. That advocacy role marks the distinction between AACTE and CAEP. CAEP is an accreditation group, not an advocacy group. This is a critical distinction that both the profession and the public must understand and I hope you, and this AACTE initiative you announce in the blog, will work to make that distinction clear to the AACTE membership.

You allude to concerns stated in the AACTE vote that you reference in your blog; these concerns include CAEP's governance. The NCATE-TEAC Design Team developed CAEP's governance process. If there are ways to improve it I am sure that the CAEP Board and staff are open to hearing them. Currently the Nominating Committee works very hard to ensure diversity in all its aspects and to make sure that we are including all stakeholders in the work of improving P-12 learning and development. Recruiting top-notch volunteers from our ranks is a critical task that AACTE could assist in many effective ways.

Unfortunately much of the public have lost faith in what we as teacher educators do; we need to do everything we can to regain it. Teacher education accreditation has been criticized for being "in house" and concerned with meeting the needs of its membership, which is seen by many as a conflict of interest. Having an independent accreditation process is a critical step in restoring the public's trust.

Of course, all constituencies who are stakeholders in P-12 education and the preparation of teachers need to be heard, as we implement the CAEP standards, and I appreciate your efforts at dialogue and collaboration. The job of enhancing the preparation of the nation's teachers is a huge job, and any ways that we can reduce duplicative efforts, and support each organization in achieving this goal, should be pursued.

I look forward to further discussions that will achieve our mutual goal of improving P-12 learning through effective teacher preparation.