

**Connecticut State Board of Education
Hartford**

To Be Proposed:

March 4, 2026

Resolved, That the State Board of Education (SBE), pursuant to Section 10-145d-9(g)(1)(A) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, grants full approval to Sacred Heart University (SHU) for the period March 4, 2026, through March 31, 2033, for the purpose of certifying graduates from SHU in the following areas and directs the Commissioner to take necessary action.

<u>Program</u>	<u>Grade Level</u>	<u>Program Level</u>	<u>Program Type</u>
Elementary Education	PK-6	Initial	Undergraduate/Graduate
Secondary Grades			
English	4-12	Initial	Undergraduate/Graduate
History/Social Studies	4-12	Initial	Undergraduate/Graduate
Mathematics	4-12	Initial	Undergraduate/Graduate
General Science	4 -12	Initial	Undergraduate/Graduate
Biology	4-12	Initial	Undergraduate/Graduate
Chemistry	4-12	Initial	Undergraduate/Graduate
Spanish	4-12	Initial	Undergraduate/Graduate
Music	PK-12	Initial	Undergraduate/Graduate
Comprehensive Special Education	PK-12	Initial	Graduate
Remedial Reading/ Language Arts	1-12	Advanced	Graduate
Reading/Language Arts Consultant	PK-12	Advanced	
Speech/Language Pathology ¹	PK-12	Advanced	Graduate
Intermediate Administration and Supervision	PK-12	Advanced	Graduate
Superintendent of Schools	PK-12	Advanced	Graduate
School Counseling	PK-12	Advanced	Graduate

Approved by a vote of ____ this fourth day of March, Two Thousand Twenty-Six.

Signed: _____
Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Secretary
State Board of Education

¹ Accredited by Council on Academic Accreditation Audiology|Speech Pathology

**Connecticut State Board of Education
Hartford**

To: State Board of Education

From: Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education

Date: March 4, 2026

Subject: Continuing Approval of Sacred Heart University Educator Preparation Programs

Executive Summary

Introduction

Per Connecticut legislation (Special Act No. 16-22) and State Board of Education (SBE) policy, all Connecticut educator preparation providers (EPPs) must become a Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) partner and become nationally accredited through CAEP. Additionally, per the SBE as of October 6, 2021, Connecticut uses accreditation decisions based on CAEP accreditation visits to determine state continuing approval status for Connecticut EPPs. During spring 2025, Sacred Heart University (SHU) hosted its CAEP visit to determine continuing national accreditation and state program approval for all programs offered. This report provides a summary of accreditation findings and the CAEP accreditation decision for SHU based on the spring 2025 visit, including the Commissioner's recommendation for continuing approval.

History/Background

Located in Fairfield, Connecticut, SHU is a private, coeducational university serving approximately 5,600 full- and part-time undergraduate students and 3,000 graduate students through 70 undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, and certificate programs across five colleges. SHU is regionally accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE).

The SHU Isabelle Farrington College of Education offers initial certification programs in elementary education and various secondary subject areas, including English language arts, social studies/history, science (biology, chemistry, and general science), mathematics, music and Spanish. Additionally, SHU offers advanced certification programs in reading, special education, speech/language pathology, school counseling, intermediate administration, and superintendent of schools. SHU also offers multiple non-certification programs leading to a Master of Education degree and a Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. SHU educator preparation programs are currently fully approved by the SBE and nationally accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

SHU, previously nationally accredited by CAEP, hosted its CAEP accreditation visit during spring 2025. The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) received the CAEP Action Report pertaining to the spring 2025 accreditation visit on November 17, 2025. As indicated in the report, SHU has

successfully met all CAEP standards at both the initial and advanced levels and was granted full accreditation for seven years. Two Areas for Improvement (AFI) for initial programs and one AFI was identified for advanced programs. AFIs indicate areas which must be improved by the time of the next CAEP accreditation visit, with programs reporting remediation efforts of AFIs included as part of the annual reports that EPPs are required to submit to CAEP. Accreditation for seven years is granted if the EPP meets all CAEP standards and components even if AFIs are identified in the CAEP Action Report based on the accreditation visit. The chart below shows the AFIs identified for Sacred Heart University.

Initial Programs	Areas of Improvement	Rationale
R5.2 Data Quality	The EPP provided limited evidence that the EPP's Quality Assurance System relied on relevant, verifiable, representative, cumulative, and actionable measures to ensure interpretations of data were valid and consistent.	While most of the data from proprietary assessments were valid and reliable, there was limited documentation that the EPP ensured that the data from the Candidate Preservice Assessment of Student Teaching (CPAST) and Educator Disposition Assessment (EDA) were consistent. Site interviews revealed that some clinical educators would welcome more preparation and calibration for the CPAST instrument.
R5.3 Stakeholder Involvement	The EPP provided limited evidence of internal and external stakeholder involvement in program design, evaluation, and continuous improvement process.	The EPP provided limited documentation of external stakeholders engaged in program evaluation and continuous improvement. There was little documentation of external stakeholders' review of EPP outcomes on a systematic, on-going basis. Most of the evidence provided for Standard R5 was relevant to Standard R2.
Advanced Programs	Areas for Improvement	Rationale
RA4.1 Satisfaction of Employers	The EPP provided limited evidence demonstrating that employers were satisfied with completers' preparation for their assigned responsibilities.	The EPP provided some evidence to support collection of employer satisfaction. However, not all programs provided 3-cycles of data or had data to support

		employer satisfaction. Evidence provided demonstrated the start of a process for continued collection.
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Once CAEP Action Reports are received, the CSDE Review Committee meets to review the report and makes a recommendation to the Commissioner of Education regarding the continuing approval of educator preparation programs based upon Connecticut educator preparation regulations. On December 9, 2025, the CSDE Review Committee reviewed the CAEP Action Report and unanimously recommended full continuing approval for the period March 4, 2026, through March 31, 2033.

Recommendation and Justification

I am recommending full continuing approval for SHU’s educator preparation programs for the period March 4, 2026, through March 31, 2033, due to SHU’s CAEP accreditation status based on a spring 2025 accreditation visit. Given CAEP’s seven-year visit cycle, SHU’s next CAEP accreditation visit is scheduled for spring 2032. The March 31, 2033, state approval deadline allows time for the CSDE to receive the final CAEP Action Report based on the spring 2032 visit and prepare a report for the SBE.

Follow-up Activity

If the SBE grants full approval for Sacred Heart University’s educator preparation programs, the Talent Office will immediately communicate SHU’s approval status with the university leadership.

Prepared by: Lauren Tafrate, Associate Education Consultant, Talent Office

Reviewed by: Shuana K. Tucker, Ph. D., Chief Talent Officer, Talent Office

Approved by: Sinthia Sone-Moyano, Deputy Commissioner of
 Educational Supports and Wellness