

April 1, 2015

Dear CAEP Board Members:

We, the members of CAEP staff, including Accreditation, Communications, Executive Officers, Administrative staff, Member State Relations, Finance, Program Review, Research, and Technology would like to go on record with the strongest possible letter of support for Dr. James Cibulka as President of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Jim Cibulka has provided vision, leadership, and direction to CAEP in its efforts to “raise the bar” in teacher preparation. As staff members, we have benefitted from his expertise, his tireless efforts on the behalf of the organization, and his thoughtful and considerate guidance to staff. Every staff suggestion has been thoughtfully considered and appropriate changes have been made based on these suggestions. These changes include such things as the sharing with staff of the decision-making processes, regularly scheduled associate luncheons, staff retreats where concerns are shared and steps are taken to ensure continuous improvement, and the revision of the staff evaluation process. In addition, Dr. Cibulka had an outside consultant conduct interviews with all senior staff members on how he could become a better leader for the group. He acted on these suggestions and made changes.

His vision for the future has been clearly articulated, but like all visionaries, he has been criticized and taken to task. He has taken every opportunity to address his critics and like Lincoln’s *Team of Rivals*, he has invited them to the table to talk about their differences and to participate in the process. He incorporates feedback from EPPs, states, and other stakeholders while keeping the CAEP mission at the forefront. Listed below are just a few of the levers that Jim has put in place to ensure the quality of teacher preparation programs:

- Rigorous, outcome based standards
- Vision of accreditation beyond compliance
- Research at the forefront for standard development
 - Transformation Initiative Pathway
 - Research Committee
 - Research position at CAEP
- Focus on the Quality of Evidence

- Early Instrument Review
- OVA representation
- Clinical Participation and Partnerships
- Annual Report process to ensure continuous improvement
- Professional development for EPPs and Reviewers
- Collaboration
- Focus on Transparency and Responsibility
- Development of a state alliance
- Data Initiative
- Focus on equity issues for MSIs

Dr. Cibulka's commitment to teacher education is evident through his creation of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Clinical Experience, the Data Task Force, and the Standard committees. His leadership at the national level has raised the profile of teacher education by ensuring that all stakeholders are at the table and all voices are heard. This commitment to inclusion is shared with the staff and is a key value of CAEP. Testimony to how the staff has embraced Jim's vision of CAEP can be found in the McKinsey Report. Based on McKinsey's interviews with staff members, key stakeholders, EPPs, and state partners, the strength of Dr. Cibulka's leadership was in his vision and mission for CAEP. His goal is to make CAEP a model accreditor. The staff support and shares his vision for CAEP and value his leadership. Additional support for Jim's leadership can be found in the McKinsey's report on the level of commitment on the part of CAEP volunteers to the process. Volunteers reported that they were willing to commit more time to the review process.

Jim Cibulka took on an enormous task of combining two different organizations, shifting the focus from an "input" based system to an "outcome" based system of accreditation, and to make sure the ultimate goal of the teacher education accreditation process was to positively impact P-12 learning. Like all transitions, the road has not always been smooth. There have been mistakes and missteps, but through it all Jim Cibulka has maintained his commitment to the vision of CAEP. The staff has found his leadership invaluable and he has our full support.

In the office, Jim has created an environment that supports staff development, innovation, and collaboration. He seeks staff input, is a thoughtful listener, and makes data driven decisions. He gives all of us every opportunity to be successful while holding us accountable for the quality of our work. He deeply cares about everyone who works with him and trusts them implicitly. He genuinely cares about creating a work involvement where staff enjoying coming to work, where their ideas are heard, and where they are supported. We are happy to report that staff morale has never been higher than in the last

16 months. This letter is to let Jim Cibulka and others know of his commitment to CAEP and to document the unwavering support of his staff.

We are all committed to CAEP's mission and whole-heartedly support the leadership of Jim Cibulka.

Sincerely,

Stemi Chepro, Sr. UP. for Accreditation

Keisha Walker, Lead Administrative & Operations Associate

 IT support

Monica Crouch, Accreditation Associate,

Lavon Greenwood, Staff Accountant ^{Program Review}

Emerson J. Elliott

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Glenda Breach, Formative Evaluation Specialist

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Banhi Bhattacharya, Senior Director, Program Review.

Elizabeth A. Vitky, Senior Director of State & Member Relations

Fatty Corvin, Senior Director, Accreditation

 Chief Financial Officer.

Frank Huang, CEO (T. for Frank Huang)

Hudson Du, IT programmer (T. for Hudson Du)

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~~*Wesley*~~, Executive Assistant to the President