



October 28, 2025

Dr. Stephen Pruitt  
President  
SACS Commission on Colleges  
1866 Southern Lane  
Decatur, GA 30033

**Re: Closure of the Graduate Certificate in Elementary Education Program**

Dear Dr. Pruitt,

Please accept this letter as notification of the closure of the graduate certificate in Elementary Education, effective August 17, 2026.

Students will no longer be admitted to the graduate certificate in Elementary Education after August 17, 2026. As of fall 2025, there are two newly enrolled students. The courses they need to complete the certificate will continue to be offered, so the program closure will not affect their ability to complete the program, even if their enrollment lapses, as students can typically complete the requirements in one academic year. There are two students with lapsed enrollment from the program. The courses they need will continue to be offered, should those students choose to return and complete the certificate. Any prospective students seeking advising about enrollment in the program in spring or summer 2026 will be told by the Department of Theory & Practice in Teacher Education (TPTE) Graduate Studies Director that the program will not be offered after August 17, 2026.

TPTE faculty and staff were made aware that the graduate certificate in Elementary Education program was being proposed for closure in fall 2025, prior to documentation being submitted to the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences' (CEHHS) Curricular Review Committee meeting in September 2025. Digital Learning and the CEHHS Director of Marketing and Communications, were notified on September 30, 2025 of the proposed closure. On October 15, 2025 the CEHHS Curricular Review Committee voted to close the program. UT Knoxville's Undergraduate Curriculum Committee will vote on the closure of the program on November 6, 2025. Undergraduate Council will vote on the closure on November 21, 2025. Faculty Senate will vote on the closure on February 2, 2026. Upon approval by Faculty Senate, the college's Director of Marketing will be notified to remove the program from the CEHHS website and the TPTE website, and Digital Learning will be notified to remove the program from the Vols Online website.

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Admissions will be informed of the graduate certificate in Elementary Education program closure through the on-campus approval process described above. The Director of Graduate Studies and advisor for the graduate certificate in Elementary Education program, has been made aware of the program closure and will advise any prospective students accordingly. Community and industry partners will not be contacted about this program closure due to limited interest in the program since its inception in fall 2021. This program was designed for licensed teachers to add an endorsement in Elementary Education, and now an additional endorsement in Elementary Education by the Tennessee Department of Education no longer mandates coursework.

The department will not provide teach-out options for student to complete the graduate certificate in Elementary Education program at another institution, as the coursework required for this program is included in other programs that are continuing to be offered by the department. Therefore, there will be no disruption or additional cost for students who wish to complete the program. Since courses are included in other programs within the department, there will be no changes to faculty roles or responsibilities.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Heather Hartman

Associate Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness  
and SACSCOC Liaison

Cc: Donde Plowman, Chancellor  
John Zomchick, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor  
Beth Avery Foster, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs  
Ellen McIntyre, Dean, College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences