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# Within Our Grasp

## Achieving Higher Admissions Standards in Teacher Prep

2016 State Teacher Policy  
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### Staff

#### AUTHORS

Kate Walsh, Nithya Joseph and Autumn Lewis

#### CONTRIBUTORS

Kelli Lakis, Lisa Staresina, Hannah Putman, Sam Lubell, Kimberly Charis, Chelsea Harrison, Shobana Sampath, Thisie Schisler-Do, and Winnie Tsang

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## Achieving Higher Admissions Standards in Teacher Prep

### Executive Summary

No parent wants his or her child to be taught by an ineffective teacher. As the school year begins each September, parents sometimes worry that their child's teacher may not be able to manage the classroom, may not be able to inspire students to reach higher levels of learning, or simply may not be up to the job. These worries grow when a teacher is new to the classroom, teaching without the benefit of a few years of experience. The responsibility for these worries often falls on a state's teacher preparation programs, so it is crucial that the programs set high standards to admit only the best candidates.

A strong body of research supports a relationship between student performance and the selectivity of admissions into teacher preparation. Nations, such as Finland, whose students outperform ours on national tests recruit teacher candidates from the top 10 percent of their college graduates. High admissions standards are especially important because after a candidate is admitted to a preparation program, he or she will probably face few hurdles for entry into the profession.

### State admissions standards rose between 2011 and 2015 and fell in 2016

Raising the bar for entry into preparation programs resonates with states and school districts, which certainly recognize the importance of attracting talented college students into the teaching profession. As a result, 25 states strengthened admissions standards between 2011 and 2015, with 11 states establishing higher admissions standards through state law and 14 states doing so through national accreditation. The number of states establishing a minimum 3.0 GPA requirement went from seven in 2013 to 25 in 2015, and the number requiring that teacher candidates take tests designed for all college students (such as the ACT or SAT) went from three to 19 during that same time. While both approaches have advantages and limitations, some states have put forward admissions policies that employ multiple measures and flexibility.

Part of the increase in the number of states with stronger admissions standards came from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation's (CAEP) 2013 requirements for accredited institutions, which included a get-tough standard for admission to teacher preparation programs. That new policy meant that its partner states requiring programs to meet CAEP's standards automatically agreed to enforce or at least endorse such changes.

Unfortunately, CAEP's attempt to raise entry requirements proved to be short-lived. By the summer of 2016, CAEP's board agreed to let programs delay verifying their students' academic ability *until graduation*. Since education courses tend to award higher grades, this change essentially nullified CAEP's selection standard.

As a result, fewer states had rigorous admissions requirements in 2016. The number of states requiring a GPA of 3.0 or higher for preparation program admissions dropped from 25 in 2015 to the 11 that have this provision in state law in 2016; and only three states now require a college-level test before program entry, down from 19 in 2015. In addition, with CAEP's standards now weakened, most state admissions policies remain woefully inadequate.

## Lower admissions standards cannot effectively solve teacher shortages or increase teacher diversity

One frequently heard argument against rigorous admissions policies is a fear that they will make teacher shortages worse. During shortages, institutions and policymakers may see lowering teacher preparation programs' admissions standards as a quick and easy solution to obtaining more teachers. In reality, low admissions standards not only weaken the quality of teacher candidates but also may actually exacerbate shortages by discouraging talented students from pursuing the teaching profession. A survey of college students with high GPAs found that 58 percent would be more likely to consider majoring in education *if admissions standards were raised*. Moreover, there is evidence that drops in enrollment in teacher education programs were temporary due to districts dismissing teachers and cutting back on hiring during the Great Recession. Now that more teaching jobs are available, an increasing number of college students in some states are enrolling in teacher preparation programs.

Opponents also raise concerns about a negative effect of rigorous admissions standards on efforts to increase teacher diversity. However, there is evidence showing that this does not have to happen. Many teacher preparation programs have successfully set selective admissions criteria while maintaining a diverse cohort of teacher candidates. An NCTQ analysis of nearly 900 undergraduate elementary programs finds that 13 percent – 113 programs – are both selective and diverse. Moreover, even if black and Hispanic students entered teacher preparation programs at the same rate as their white counterparts, the impact on the overall composition of the teacher workforce would be negligible. Other strategies, particularly in combination, would better patch the teacher pipeline, mostly by increasing the number of black and Hispanic undergraduates who are able to obtain a college degree and by school districts doing a better job of retaining their teachers of color.



## Programs meet higher standards even when not required to do so

Given the pushback that states and CAEP have faced when trying to raise program admissions standards, it seems reasonable to expect that many programs would be unable to meet more rigorous entry requirements. But an examination of admissions policies in up to 10 institutions with the largest preparation program enrollment in each of the 14 states requiring CAEP accreditation and in the 11 states that separately passed new laws found that this was not the case.

Using the most recent program-level GPA admissions requirements, as well as average institution-level SAT and ACT scores from 2013-2014, we found that a majority of the 221 undergraduate elementary programs we examined likely met higher GPA and testing requirements for admissions. In the states with laws requiring an average GPA of 3.0, nearly three-fourths of programs likely met these requirements, and only about one in 10 likely did not. In the two states (**Rhode Island** and **West Virginia**) that also established stronger testing requirements and that had publicly available testing data, seven out of 14 programs examined likely met these requirements and only five likely did not. Even in the CAEP states that no longer require programs to meet GPA and testing standards at the point of admission, over half of the programs included in this study likely did meet CAEP's admissions standard as originally written, compared to only 13 percent that likely did not.

If these rigorous requirements really did burden teacher prep programs, far more would take advantage of the CAEP change and opt to demonstrate the academic aptitude of their students later in their preparation.

## Recommendations

While there are no perfect admissions criteria, the need for a higher bar for program entry is clear. States are best positioned to meet this need if they establish a raised bar for entry while providing programs with an appropriate level of discretion over individual applicant decisions.

States, CAEP, and programs themselves can all play a major role in creating more meaningful admissions standards. Specifically:

- 1. States should maintain a commitment to stronger admissions requirements.**
- 2. CAEP should identify a pathway to achieve higher admissions standards.**
- 3. Teacher preparation programs can and should implement a more meaningful bar for admission to their programs.**

Higher standards for entrance into teacher preparation programs benefit teacher candidates, their future students, and the profession as a whole. While only a few programs in this study fail to set rigorous admissions requirements that clearly meet a higher bar for program entry, these few will

likely allow new teachers to enter classrooms without first proving their academic abilities. States, programs, and accreditation entities each have a responsibility to set high standards and hold programs accountable for meeting them.

In light of our nation’s urgent need for high-quality teachers and the evidence that weakening standards is not necessary to solve the problems voiced by opponents, states should stay on course or firmly establish a higher bar for entry into teacher preparation.

Raising admissions standards to combat a low regard for the teaching profession and to increase the talent pool of teacher candidates has to be part of the larger strategy to achieve a more talented teacher workforce. While it is just the first step, it is essential to help ensure the best possible teachers for our children.



# Within Our Grasp Achieving Higher Admissions Standards in Teacher Prep



## Introduction

No parent wants his or her child to be taught by an ineffective teacher. As the school year begins each September, parents sometimes worry that their child's teacher may not be able to manage the classroom, may not be able to inspire students to reach higher levels of learning, or simply may not be up to the job. These worries grow when a teacher is new to the classroom, teaching without the benefit of a few years of experience.

The responsibility for these worries often falls on a state's teacher preparation programs, so it is crucial that the programs admit only the best candidates. This is especially true because after a candidate is admitted to a preparation program, he or she will probably face few hurdles for entry into the profession.

Recognizing the importance of high standards for these programs, from 2011 to 2015, many states and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) made significant progress in toughening up formerly lax admissions requirements. Unfortunately, in the past year, some of that progress has been reversed, largely because teacher education's accreditor was forced to retreat from its rigorous 2013 admissions standard.

Those states that did not rely only on CAEP, but which acted on their own with new laws, appear to be standing firm.

CAEP retreated from its previous position largely due to pressure from preparation programs that raised fears over teacher shortages and the critical need to improve teacher diversity. In reality, setting lower standards for program admissions will not resolve these problems; and a strong argument can be made that lower requirements for program entry exacerbate, rather than solve, shortages.

This paper calls into question CAEP's retreat, demonstrating that most states have programs that are already meeting the strengthened admissions standard, leaving only a fraction of programs that are not likely meeting a higher bar for entry.

In light of our nation’s urgent need for high-quality teachers and the evidence that weakening standards is not necessary to solve the problems raised by opponents, states that recently raised their admissions standards should stay on course or restore a higher bar for entry into teacher preparation.

## The case for raising entry requirements

### Higher admissions standards, smarter hiring

Once teacher candidates enter a preparation program, they nearly always graduate. Even programs that have almost no academic barriers to admission award their teacher candidates grades that are higher than those earned by other students on the same campus.<sup>1</sup> Cooperating teachers routinely rate *all* of their student teachers “above average.”<sup>2</sup> The minimum scores institutions set to pass performance assessments such as the edTPA are generally so low that almost all candidates pass, particularly since there are almost no limits on how many times the test can be retaken.<sup>3</sup> States also set the minimum score on licensing tests quite low and provide multiple opportunities to retake the test.<sup>4,5,6</sup>

Given these scant checks on teacher candidates once they are admitted to preparation programs, it becomes all the more essential for both states and programs to set a meaningful bar for entry.

Those recommending improvement in America’s competitiveness often point to the selectivity in teacher recruitment found in nations that outperform the United States on international tests, such as Finland, which recruits teacher candidates from the top 10 percent of college graduates.<sup>7</sup> A strong body of research supports a relationship between student performance and the selectivity of admissions into teacher preparation.<sup>8</sup>

- 1 Kapel, D. E. (1980). A case history of differential grading: Do teacher education majors really receive higher grades? *Journal of Teacher Education*, 31(4), 43-47. Koedel, C. (2011). Grading standards in education departments at universities. *Education Policy Analysis Archives* 19(23). National Council on Teacher Quality. (2014). *Training our future teachers: Easy A’s and what’s behind them*, 2.
- 2 Brucklacher, B. (1998). Cooperating teachers’ evaluations of student teachers: All “A’s”? *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 25(1), 67-72.
- 3 Goldhaber, D., Cowan, J., & Theobald, R. (2016). Evaluating prospective teachers: Testing the predictive validity of the edTPA. CALDER Working Paper no. 157, 7-10.
- 4 National Council on Teacher Quality. (2011). *State Teacher Policy Yearbook*, 6.
- 5 Goldhaber, D., Gratz, T., & Theobald, R. (2016). What’s in a teacher test? Assessing the relationship between teacher licensure test scores and student secondary STEM achievement. CALDER Working Paper no. 158, 14.
- 6 U.S. Department of Education (2010). *The secretary’s seventh annual report on teacher quality: A highly qualified teacher in every classroom*, 23.
- 7 Barber, M., & Mourshed, M. (2007). *How the world’s best-performing school systems come out on top*. McKinsey & Company, 19.
- 8 For research supporting greater selectivity for teacher preparation programs, see Boyd, D., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., Rockoff, J., & Wyckoff, J. (2008). The narrowing gap in New York City teacher qualifications and its implications for student achievement in high-poverty schools, *National Bureau of Economic Research* No. w14021, 15. Steele, J. L., Pepper, M. J., Springer, M. G., & Lockwood, J. R. (2015). The distribution and mobility of effective teachers: Evidence from a large, urban school district. *Economics of Education Review* 48, 86-101. Lincove, J. L., Osborne, C., Mills, N., & Bellows, L. (2015). Teacher preparation for profit or prestige: Analysis of a diverse market for teacher preparation. *Journal of Teacher Education* 66(5), 415-434. Henry, G. T., Bastian, K. C., & Smith, A. A. (2012). Scholarships to recruit the “Best and Brightest” into teaching: Who is recruited, where do they teach, how effective are they, and how long do they stay? *Educational Researcher* 41(3), 83-92.



This message resonates with states and school districts, which certainly recognize the importance of attracting talented college students into the profession. As a result, during 2011-2015, many states established minimum GPAs and began insisting that teacher candidates take tests designed for any student heading to college as opposed to tests designed only for prospective teachers.

## The need to raise admissions standards through nuanced policy

States that have strengthened admissions standards have done so in two ways: through setting more rigorous testing or GPA requirements. A few states have done both.

### TESTING

Requiring teacher candidates to score in the top half on a test that is taken by all high school students heading to college (such as the ACT or SAT) as an admissions requirement will do a relatively accurate job of screening out those with below-average academic ability. Some research has found that a teacher's academic aptitude measured by the SAT or ACT is linked, albeit weakly, to future teaching effectiveness.<sup>9</sup> However, using standardized assessments as the sole academic requirement for admissions may not be advisable. Although there is little research demonstrating this concern, programs have raised concerns that mandating tests could result in fewer candidates of color qualifying for admission — students who, by all other measures, are considered qualified.

### GPA REQUIREMENTS

Using only GPA as the academic yardstick has also proven somewhat controversial. Critics often cite the lack of objectivity inherent in a grade point average, or the “easy A” phenomenon. However, research has found that high school GPAs are five times more predictive than an SAT score of whether someone will finish college, presumably serving as a proxy of sorts for grit.<sup>10</sup>

### MULTIPLE MEASURES

Balancing these criticisms, some states have put forward admissions policies that employ multiple measures and flexibility. Most states have elected to mandate cohort GPA requirements as opposed to individual GPA minimums in order to provide programs with discretion over individual applicant admissions decisions. Others exempt a small percentage of their candidates from admissions requirements to accommodate exceptional candidates who do not meet requirements. Some require both tests and GPA measures as part of their admissions policy; others allow candidates to meet admissions requirements through either indicator.<sup>11</sup>

9 Ehrenberg, R. G., & Brewer, D. J. (1993). Did teachers' verbal ability and race matter in the 1960s? Coleman Revisited. *Economics of Education Review* 14(1), 1-21. Levin, H. M. (1970). A cost-effectiveness analysis of teacher selection. *The Journal of Human Resources* 5(1). Boyd, D., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., Rockoff, J., & Wyckoff, J. (2008). The narrowing gap in New York City teacher qualifications and its implications for student achievement in high-poverty schools, National Bureau of Economic Research No. w14021, 15.

10 Bowen, W. G., Chingoes, M. M., & McPherson, M. S. (2009). *Crossing the finish line: Completing college at America's public universities*. Princeton University Press.

11 For details on state-level admissions requirements, see Figure 2 and Appendix A.

# States have raised their admissions standards

## Influence of accreditation on admissions standards

In 2013, CAEP issued new requirements for accredited institutions, including a remarkably get-tough standard for admission to teacher preparation programs. That new policy meant that its many partner states requiring programs to meet CAEP's standards automatically agreed to enforce or at least endorse such changes. At the time of the new standards' release, CAEP President James G. Cibulka announced that "CAEP is raising the bar for educator preparation, ensuring that providers are producing highly effective teachers for every classroom and helping to ensure that all of America's P-12 students are prepared to compete in today's global economy."<sup>12</sup>

Almost overnight, in states requiring CAEP accreditation, higher admissions standards became the norm. Originally, programs in these states needed to demonstrate by 2018 that, at the point of candidates' admission, each new class of teacher applicants had an average collective GPA of 3.0 and scored above the 50th percentile on a test taken by all college students, such as the SAT or ACT, not a test taken only by aspiring teachers such as the Praxis Basic Skills test.<sup>13</sup> The proposal was stunningly bold given that most programs, if they asked for any grade point average, required only a 2.5 minimum, even though 72 percent of all college students have a GPA of at least 3.0.<sup>14,15</sup>

Unfortunately, CAEP's attempt to raise entry requirements proved to be short-lived. Many of the institutions it sought to accredit never accepted this new standard, as demonstrated by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education's (AACTE) open criticism of CAEP's higher admissions standards in 2013, leading to a declaration of a "crisis of confidence" two years later.<sup>16,17</sup>

At first, CAEP tried to appease programs' complaints by delaying implementation of its selection standard. However, by the summer of 2016, CAEP's board approved a change that undermined the proposed selection standard entirely.<sup>18</sup> Under the new selection standard, programs can now choose to delay

12 Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation. (2013, August 29). *New accreditation standards adopted*. Retrieved September 14, 2016 from <http://caepnet.org/about/news-room/statements-press-releases/new-accreditation-standards-adopted>

13 Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation. *Standard 3: Candidate Quality, Recruitment, and Selectivity*. Retrieved May 24, 2016 from <http://www.caepnet.org/standards/standard-3>

14 National Council on Teacher Quality. (2014). *Standard 1: Selection Criteria*. Retrieved from [http://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Teacher\\_Prep\\_Review\\_2014\\_Std1](http://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Teacher_Prep_Review_2014_Std1)

15 United States Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2015). *2008/12 Baccalaureate and beyond longitudinal study (BE-B: 08/12)* [Data file]. Available from <http://nces.ed.gov/datalab/>

16 Sawchuk, S. (2013). AACTE critiques proposed accreditation standards. *Education Week*. Retrieved from [http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/teacherbeat/2013/04/aacte\\_highlights\\_concerns\\_on\\_proposed\\_accreditation\\_standards.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/teacherbeat/2013/04/aacte_highlights_concerns_on_proposed_accreditation_standards.html)

17 American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. (2015, February 27). *AACTE Board Resolution on CAEP*. Retrieved November 4, 2016 from <http://www.aacte.org/news-room/press-releases-statements/488-aacte-board-resolution-on-caep>

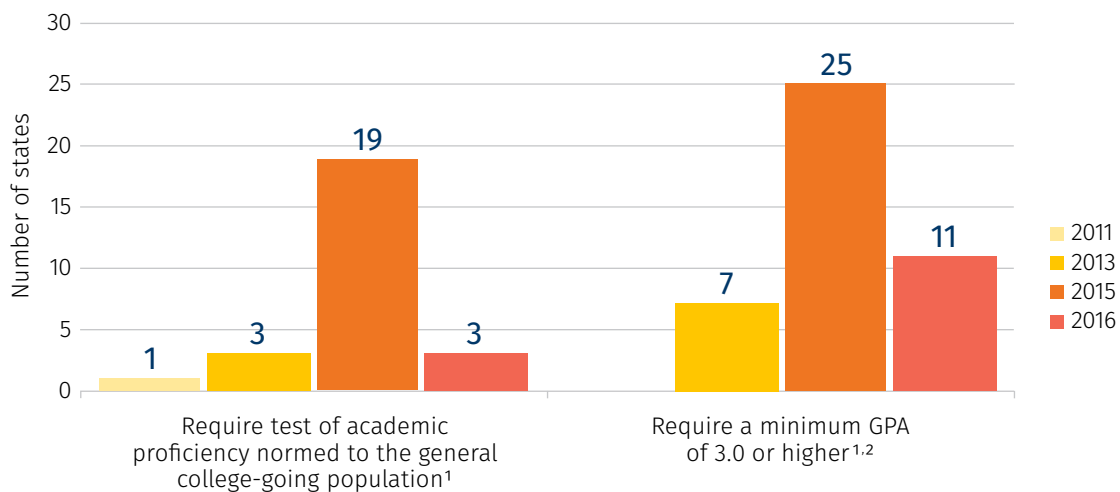
18 Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation. *Demonstrating academic achievement: CAEP board clarifies, refines CAEP Standard 3*. Retrieved July 16, 2016 from <http://caepnet.org/about/news-room/caep-board-clarifies-refines-caep-standa>

verifying their students' academic ability *until graduation*, using the historically higher grades earned while pursuing the education major and test scores obtained at any time during a student's college career.<sup>19,20</sup> This 2016 policy has essentially nullified CAEP's selection standard.

CAEP's decision to walk back its selection requirements has meant that its partner states no longer maintain rigorous admissions policies. With CAEP's standards now diluted, state laws remain woefully inadequate on admissions (see Appendix A).

Quite a few states (11) directly raised preparation program admissions requirements in state law, as opposed to indirectly taking this action through accreditation. Those 11 states have, by and large, maintained their commitment to a higher bar for program entry.

Figure 1. State admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs, 2011-2016



1. In Utah, candidates can qualify for admission through the GPA or test requirement.
2. NCTQ did not track state-level GPA admissions requirements for preparation programs in 2011.

Note: Due to CAEP's change in its selection standard, between 2015 and 2016 the number of states with rigorous testing and GPA requirements for program admission dropped.

## States that retain strong admissions requirements in state law

While CAEP's action to weaken its selection standard nullified the rigor of admissions requirements in states requiring its accreditation, this is not the case for the 11 states that established a strong bar for program entry within state law. All of these states require a 3.0 GPA, either through a cohort average or individual requirement, and three (**Rhode Island, Utah, and West Virginia**) also mandate a rigorous testing requirement.<sup>21</sup>

19 Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation. *Standard 3: Candidate quality, recruitment, and selectivity*. Retrieved September 14, 2016 from <http://www.caepnet.org/standards/standard-3>

20 Kapel, D. E. (1980). A case history of differential grading: Do teacher education majors really receive higher grades? *Journal of Teacher Education*, 31(4), 43-47. Koedel, C. (2011). Grading standards in education departments at universities. *Education Policy Analysis Archives* 19(23). National Council on Teacher Quality. (2014). *Training our future teachers: Easy A's and what's behind them*, 2.

21 In Utah, candidates can qualify for admission through either a rigorous GPA or test requirement.





Figure 2. States with strong program admissions requirements in state law

State	State GPA requirements for preparation program admissions	State testing requirements for preparation program admissions
Alabama	2.75 individual minimum; 3.0 cohort average	A basic skills test
Georgia <sup>1</sup>	2.5 individual minimum; 3.0 cohort average	A basic skills test Teacher preparation programs can exempt candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the SAT, ACT, or GRE.
Mississippi	2.75 individual minimum; 3.0 cohort average	A basic skills test Teacher preparation programs can exempt candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the ACT.
Montana	3.0 cohort average	None
New Jersey <sup>2</sup>	2.75 individual minimum; 3.0 cohort average	A basic skills test Teacher preparation programs can exempt candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the SAT, ACT, or GRE.
North Carolina <sup>2</sup>	2.7 individual minimum; 3.0 cohort average	A basic skills test Teacher preparation programs can exempt candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the SAT or ACT.
Pennsylvania <sup>1</sup>	3.0 individual minimum; programs may admit applicants with a 2.8 GPA and qualifying scores on the basic skills test or SAT/ACT.	A basic skills test Teacher preparation programs can exempt candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the SAT or ACT.
Rhode Island <sup>3</sup>	2.75 individual minimum; 3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile
Texas <sup>4</sup>	2.5 individual minimum; 3.0 cohort average	Applicants can meet the testing requirement through several options, including passing a test normed to the general college-going population. Applicants can also meet this requirement through other means, including obtaining an associate’s degree or a bachelor’s degree, enrollment in a certification program, or serving as a member of the armed forces.
Utah <sup>1</sup>	3.0 individual minimum Utah allows candidates to qualify by meeting either the GPA or test requirement.	ACT composite score of 21 with a verbal/English score no less than 20 and a mathematics/quantitative score of no less than 19; or a combined SAT score of 1000 with neither mathematics nor verbal below 450 Utah allows candidates to qualify by meeting either the GPA or test requirement.
West Virginia	3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile

1. State allows a waiver whereby institutions can admit up to 10 percent of a candidate cohort that does not meet the admissions requirements.
2. State has a high GPA requirement but also requires CAEP accreditation.
3. State allows programs, in rare instances and with state approval, to offer conditional acceptance to candidates not meeting requirements, provided they receive appropriate support.
4. Candidates can be exempt from the minimum GPA requirement if they provide documentation that a candidate’s work, business, or career experience demonstrates achievement equivalent to the academic achievement represented by the GPA requirement. The work exception may not be used by a program to admit more than 10 percent of any cohort of candidates.

# A low bar for entry is not strategic

## Lowering admissions standards will not help alleviate teacher shortages

Generally speaking, one argument against rigorous admissions policies is based on a concern about teacher shortages. States' and districts' appetite for higher standards are strongest when the profession is flush with applicants. That enthusiasm quickly dissipated in late 2015 when policymakers and administrators began fearing that the supply of potential teachers was becoming less abundant.

In a time of mounting concern over teacher shortages, many institutions and policymakers may see lowering admissions standards to teacher preparation programs as a quick and easy solution to raise preparation program enrollment numbers to obtain more teachers. In reality, low admissions standards not only weaken the quality of teacher candidates, but also may actually exacerbate rather than alleviate shortages.

Many talented college students who are willing to consider teaching nevertheless avoid *majoring* in education. In other words, while there are a number of factors about teaching that might make it an attractive career choice, there is evidence that the education major in and of itself serves as a detractor.

When college students with higher than average GPAs were asked about their views on teaching in a 2014 survey, over half of the respondents (54 percent) said they perceived education to be an *easy* major.<sup>22</sup> Even more telling is that nearly three in five respondents (58 percent) said they would be more likely to consider majoring in education *if admissions standards were raised*.<sup>23</sup> Higher standards, not weaker ones, are key to recruiting more high-quality teacher candidates.

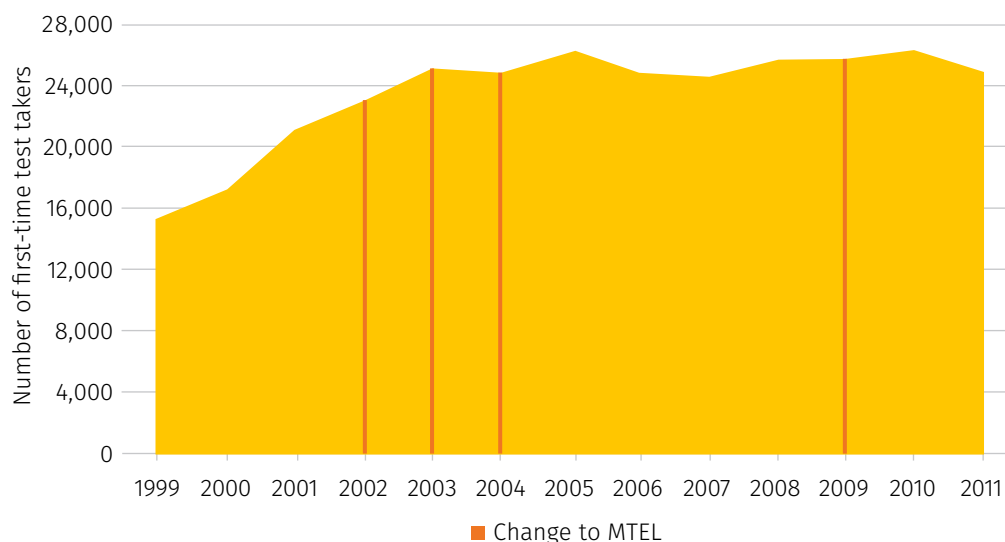
Massachusetts provides compelling evidence of what can happen when states raise their standards for entry into the profession. At several points over the last decade — 2001, 2003, and again in 2009 — the state made its licensing test tougher to pass. Over this same period, there is no evidence that Massachusetts's move suppressed the number of teacher candidates.<sup>24</sup> The following chart shows the number of first-time test takers of the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) for the two years prior to the first change through the two years after the last change.

22 Third Way. (2014, August 28). *National online survey of college students — education attitudes*. Retrieved from <http://www.thirdway.org/polling/national-online-survey-of-college-students-education-attitudes>, 36.

23 *Ibid.*, 51.

24 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (2016, October 12). *Massachusetts Test for Educator Licensure (MTEL): Past test administrations*. Retrieved November 10, 2016 from <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mtel/results.html>

Figure 3. First-time test takers of Massachusetts’s teacher licensing tests, 1999-2011



In addition, there is evidence that the 36 percent drop in enrollment in teacher education programs from 2009 to 2014 was, not surprisingly, a market-driven response to the Great Recession when districts laid off so many younger teachers and cut back on new hires.<sup>25</sup> The most recent evidence suggests that trend may be turning rather than continuing. For instance, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing found that enrollment in teacher education increased nearly 10 percent between 2013-2014 and 2014-2015.<sup>26</sup> In Indiana, the number of newly licensed teachers increased 18 percent between 2014-2015 and 2015-2016.<sup>27</sup>

## Lowering admissions standards will have little impact on teacher diversity

Evidence demonstrates that higher standards for admissions do not have to undermine diversity. Many teacher preparation programs have successfully set selective admissions criteria while maintaining a diverse cohort of teacher candidates. NCTQ’s analysis of the admissions criteria and teacher candidate cohort composition in nearly 900 undergraduate elementary programs finds that 13 percent – 113 programs – are both selective *and* diverse.<sup>28</sup>

25 Partelow, L. & Baumgardner, C. (2016). *Educator pipeline at risk: Teacher labor markets after the great recession*. Retrieved from <https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/14084443/TeacherPrep-report.pdf>, 3, 8-11.

26 Suckow, M. & Lau, P. (2016). *Annual report card on California teacher preparation programs for the academic year 2014-2015 as required by Title II of the Higher Education Act*. Educator Preparation Committee, California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Retrieved from <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2016-10/2016-10-2E.pdf>

27 McInerney, C. New teacher licenses increase for first time in three years. *Indiana Public Media*. Retrieved from <http://indianapublicmedia.org/stateimpact/2016/10/31/teacher-licenses-increase-time-years/>

28 Forthcoming in the 2016 NCTQ *Teacher Prep Review*.



Moreover, demographic evidence does not provide much support for a strategy that involves lowering academic standards to achieve greater racial and ethnic teacher diversity. The fact that black and Hispanic students enter teacher preparation programs at a lower rate than white students actually plays only a small part in the flagging diversity of the teaching workforce.<sup>29</sup> Even if black and Hispanic students entered teacher preparation programs at the same rate as their white counterparts, increasing from a rate of about 4 percent of black and Hispanic students pursuing a major in education to about 7 percent (the same rate as white college students), the impact on the overall composition of the teacher workforce would be negligible. Other strategies, particularly in combination, would better patch the teacher pipeline, mostly by increasing the number of black and Hispanic undergraduates who are able to obtain a college degree and by school districts doing a better job of retaining their teachers of color.<sup>30</sup>

Since the benefit for students of having same-race teachers is much smaller than the benefits from having an effective teacher or a strong curriculum, stakeholders should not seek teacher diversity at the expense of selectivity, nor should we assume that lowering standards will be an effective means to that goal.<sup>31,32</sup>

## Most teacher preparation programs have successfully adopted rigorous admissions standards

Given the pushback that states and CAEP have faced when trying to raise program admissions standards, it seems reasonable to expect that many programs would be unable to meet more rigorous entry requirements. But an examination of admissions policies in up to 10 institutions with the largest preparation program enrollment in each of the 14 states requiring CAEP accreditation and in the 11 states that separately passed new laws found that this was not the case.<sup>33</sup>

29 Putman, H., Hansen, M., Walsh, K., & Quintero, D. (2016). High hopes and harsh realities: The real challenges to building a diverse teacher workforce. *Brown Center on Education Policy at Brookings*. Retrieved from <https://www.brookings.edu/research/high-hopes-and-harsh-realities-the-real-challenges-to-building-a-diverse-teacher-workforce/>, 6-7.

30 *Ibid.*, 13-14.

31 Improving teacher quality from the median to the 83rd percentile had a greater impact on teachers' value-added performance than did race-matching students and teachers. See Goldhaber, D., Theobald, T., & Tien, C. (2015). The theoretical and empirical arguments for diversifying the teacher workforce: A Review of evidence. *Center for Education Data & Research Policy Brief WP # 2015-9*.

32 The benefits from a strong curriculum outweigh the benefits of teacher characteristics. See Whitehurst, G. R. (2009). Don't forget curriculum. *Brown Center Letters on Education, Brookings Institution*. Retrieved from <https://www.brookings.edu/research/dont-forget-curriculum/>

33 A total of 221 programs were examined in this study; the sample is not 250 because some states do not have 10 institutions in total. Within states with higher admissions policies in state law, this study examined 101 programs for how likely they were to meet GPA requirements and 14 programs for how likely they were to meet both GPA and testing requirements. Within the states requiring CAEP accreditation, this study examined 120 programs for how likely they were to meet GPA requirements; test score data were available for 112 of those programs, which was then used to determine how likely those programs were to meet both GPA and testing requirements at the point of candidate entry.

Using the most recent program-level GPA admissions requirements, as well as average institution-level SAT and ACT scores from 2013-2014, we found that a majority of the 221 undergraduate elementary programs we examined meet a 3.0 GPA cohort average requirement.<sup>34</sup> Even in states that had also established stronger testing requirements (**Rhode Island** and **West Virginia**), most programs would meet those requirements as well.

Complicating this analysis was the fact that most of the states did not set a minimum requirement for an individual student but rather for an incoming class (“cohort average”). Cohort averages for GPA and testing requirements were accommodated as follows:

- In states that require programs to report the *GPA average* for a cohort, programs were deemed likely to do so only by setting a minimum GPA of 2.75 for individuals, as programs would then need to admit about as many individuals with a 3.25 as a 2.75. Those programs are “**likely meeting**” their state law or CAEP standards. Programs that accept a minimum GPA of 2.5 are “**possibly meeting**” their state law or CAEP standards. Programs that have policies accepting candidates with lower than a 2.5 GPA are “**not likely meeting**” state law or CAEP standards.
- For states that require a certain cohort average on *test performance*, this analysis employed the average SAT or ACT score for students admitted to the institution as a proxy for the scores of students admitted to the teacher preparation program. While imperfect, this works in favor of programs due to well-documented evidence showing that students who plan to major in education generally score lower on standardized tests than their peers who intend to study different disciplines.<sup>35</sup>

A more detailed description of the paper’s methodology is included at the end of the report.

## Likelihood of programs meeting higher admissions requirements

### STATES REQUIRING RIGOROUS ADMISSIONS POLICIES IN STATE LAW

In states with laws requiring an average GPA of 3.0, nearly three-fourths of programs likely met those requirements, and only about one in 10 likely did not.

Figure 4. Programs’ likelihood of meeting state laws on GPA requirements

Programs analyzed	Programs likely meeting requirements	Programs possibly meeting requirements	Programs likely <b>not</b> meeting requirements
86	62 (72%)	15 (17%)	9 (11%)

34 GPA requirements for admission were obtained from programs’ most recent available course catalog or the program website; 2013-2014 data on average SAT and ACT scores at institutions were obtained from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and the most recent College Board’s Annual Survey of Colleges. A detailed methodology is included at the end of the report.

35 College Board. (2014). *2014 College-bound seniors total group profile report*. Retrieved from <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/sat/TotalGroup-2014.pdf>, 13.

Two states — **Rhode Island** and **West Virginia** — require a high GPA and require that applicants take a nationally-normed test before being admitted. **Utah** allows programs to admit candidates based on either a high GPA *or* test requirement. Because Utah requires individual test score minimums and because individual test score data are publicly unavailable, we were not able to assess whether Utah’s programs met the state’s testing requirement. Rhode Island and West Virginia, however, both require admitted candidate cohorts to score within the top 50th percentile of a nationally-normed test. As a result, we were able to assess the five programs in Rhode Island and the nine programs in West Virginia for which institution-level test score data was available. Of these 14 programs, seven likely met these rigorous requirements and only five likely did not.

Figure 5. Programs’ likelihood of meeting state testing and GPA admissions requirements

Programs analyzed <sup>36</sup>	Number of programs likely meeting requirements	Number of programs possibly meeting requirements	Number of programs likely <u>not</u> meeting requirements
14	7	2	5

## CAEP STATES

CAEP has retreated from its tough admissions standards, allowing programs — which tend to award higher grades or measure applicants through non-rigorous criteria — to measure applicant quality after taking two years of preparation program courses. Therefore programs in the 14 states requiring CAEP accreditation have no obligation to set a policy that requires each candidate cohort to achieve an average collective GPA of 3.0 and average scores above the 50th percentile on a nationally-normed test at the point of entry.

Nonetheless, this study found over half of the programs (53 percent) examined likely did meet the original CAEP selection standards (at the point of admission), even though they no longer need this to become accredited, and another 35 percent are within the range of meeting the standard. Only 13 percent likely did not meet this high standard.

Figure 6. In CAEP states, programs’ likelihood of meeting admissions requirements at the point of candidate entry

Programs analyzed <sup>37</sup>	Programs likely meeting CAEP selection standard at the point of admission	Programs possibly meeting CAEP selection standard at the point of admission	Programs likely <u>not</u> meeting CAEP selection standard at the point of admission
112	59 (53%)	39 (35%)	14 (13%)

36 One program in the sample did not have institution-level test data, so it was not included in this portion of the analysis.

37 New Jersey and North Carolina have a high GPA requirement in state law but also require CAEP accreditation. For the purposes of this analysis, they are considered with the states that have high admissions standards in state law, rather than with the CAEP states.



If these high requirements really did burden teacher preparation programs, far more would take advantage of the CAEP change and opt to demonstrate the academic aptitude of their students until later in their preparation. As NCTQ documented in a 2014 report, teacher candidates tend to earn higher grades than students in other majors, so programs could make life far easier for themselves by following the more lax modified standards.<sup>38</sup> The fact that so many programs have voluntarily set their own standards to the same level as CAEP's original target shows that these are not unreasonable demands.

## Looking forward

If policymakers and educators want to persuade greater numbers of talented individuals to pursue teaching, the solution is not to lower the bar for entry, further diminishing the profession's status. States and teacher preparation programs should resist short-term fixes to relax standards. While there are no perfect admissions criteria, the need for a higher bar for program entry is clear. States are best positioned to meet this need if they establish a raised bar for entry while providing programs with an appropriate level of discretion over individual applicant decisions.

As shown, lower admissions standards are not necessary to maintain sufficient numbers of teachers, nor are they needed to achieve teacher diversity. In states that have considered and then relaxed standards due to changes in CAEP's accreditation requirements, most programs voluntarily follow the more rigorous original requirements.

## Recommendations

States, CAEP, and programs themselves all play a major role in creating more meaningful admissions standards. Specifically:

### **1. STATES SHOULD MAINTAIN A COMMITMENT TO STRONGER ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS.**

Despite the fear of a teacher shortage and concerns about the impact of increasing rigor on teacher diversity, states should push back against efforts to dilute strong admissions requirements. Weakening the bar to entry into teacher prep only strengthens the perception that the education major, and thereby the profession, is a low-level, easy field, which then discourages talented students from considering teaching as a career. Also, as outlined previously, lowering admissions standards has not proven to be a strategic way to increase diversity in the teaching corps.

### **2. CAEP SHOULD IDENTIFY A PATHWAY TO ACHIEVE HIGHER ADMISSIONS STANDARDS.**

Over half of the programs examined in this study likely meet CAEP's original rigorous admissions requirements, even though this is now completely voluntary, and only about a tenth likely fall short. This proves that the original requirements actually are attainable. CAEP should consider using these

38 National Council on Teacher Quality. (2014). *Training our future teachers: Easy A's and what's behind them*, 2.

programs' example to convince other programs to adopt a more meaningful standard — perhaps with the assistance of those who already meet it. Also, since so many programs have demonstrated that the higher standard can be reached, CAEP should reconsider its modifications and return to its original admissions standards.

### **3. TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS CAN AND SHOULD IMPLEMENT A MORE MEANINGFUL BAR FOR ADMISSION TO THEIR PROGRAMS.**

The most desirable outcome is for individual programs to increase the rigor of entry criteria regardless of accreditation and state laws. Three measures are needed:

- Undergraduate teacher preparation programs should require that applicants score in the top 50th percentile on a college admissions test such as the SAT or ACT.
- Programs should strive for a 3.2 cohort GPA with each incoming class of candidates, reflecting the fact that three out of four college students have a 3.0.<sup>39</sup>
- Graduate teacher preparation programs should require the GRE and set meaningful cut-scores for applicant admissions.

Institutions and teacher preparation programs can do this on their own without needing anything from the state or an outside organization. In fact, this study found that a majority already do. And they may well find that more rigorous standards will make teaching more attractive to talented potential applicants.

39 United States Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2015). *2008/12 Baccalaureate and beyond longitudinal study (BE-B: 08/12)* [Data file]. Available from <http://nces.ed.gov/datalab/>

# Conclusion

## Higher standards for higher quality

Each year in a child’s education matters. If a teacher is not prepared to succeed from his or her first day in the classroom, students will fall behind and may never catch up.

It is in the interest of all stakeholders to make sure that the best people go into teaching while screening out those least likely to help children.

Higher standards for entrance into teacher preparation programs benefit teacher candidates, their future students, and the profession as a whole. While only a few programs in this study fail to clearly set rigorous admissions requirements, these few will allow new teachers to enter classrooms without first proving their academic abilities. States, programs, and accreditation entities each have a responsibility to set high standards and hold programs accountable for meeting them.

Raising admissions standards to combat a low regard for the teaching profession and to increase the talent pool of teacher candidates has to be part of the larger strategy to achieve a more talented teacher workforce. While it is just the first step, it is essential to help ensure the best possible teachers for our children.



# Detailed methodology

## Sources of data

We obtained data on required GPAs for admission from the most recent available course catalog or program website. We obtained 2013-2014 data on average SAT and ACT scores at institutions from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and the most recent College Board's Annual Survey of Colleges.

Across the 25 states that require teacher preparation programs to set a minimum cohort average GPA of 3.0 and/or a test normed to the college-bound population, we examined the undergraduate elementary programs in the 10 institutions with the largest teacher preparation program enrollment. While high admissions standards are essential in all teacher preparation programs, this paper focuses on undergraduate elementary programs. Past research has found that elementary teachers perform lower than secondary teachers on measures of aspiring teachers' academic ability.<sup>40</sup> For this reason, elementary teacher preparation programs may need to rely more heavily on admissions standards to ensure that the entering candidates are academically successful. Thus, this analysis focuses on these programs, which most need to ensure a relatively high standard for entry.

The sample in this study includes 221 teacher preparation programs. The total sample size is not 250 because some states do not have 10 institutions in total.

## GPA analysis

For most states examined in this study, the minimum GPA requirement is based on a cohort average, but in some states the GPA requirement pertains to individuals. Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, New Jersey, North Carolina, Rhode Island, and Texas incorporate both a minimum cohort average GPA of 3.0 and individual minimum GPAs (Georgia and Texas require a 2.5 individual GPA; North Carolina requires a minimum 2.7 individual GPA; and Alabama, Mississippi, New Jersey, and Rhode Island require a 2.75 individual GPA). Other states, such as Pennsylvania and Utah, forgo the cohort requirement entirely and instead focus on the academic proficiency of individual candidates.

Clearly a program requiring a *minimum* GPA of 3.0 for individuals will always meet a standard for an *average cohort* GPA of 3.0. However, if a program needs to achieve an average cohort GPA of 3.0 or above, not every candidate admitted must have that GPA. So what individual minimum GPA would be sufficiently high to achieve a 3.0 average GPA? Is requiring a minimum GPA of 2.75 for each admitted candidate — a commonly used bar — high enough? The answers to these questions are different for each institution and are based on the GPA distribution of the student body as a whole and for those individuals who choose to apply to the teacher preparation program at that institution.

40 Lankford, H., Loeb, S., McEachin, A., Miller, L. C., & Wyckoff, J. (2014). Who enters teaching? Encouraging evidence that the status of teaching is improving. *Educational Researcher*, 43(9). Podgursky, M., Monroe, R., & Watson, D. (2004). The academic quality of public school teachers: an analysis of entry and exit behavior. *Economics of Education Review*, 23(5), 507-518.

However, because these GPA distributions are not available for the institutions in our sample, it is only possible to estimate potential distributions to determine whether a GPA of 2.75 can achieve a 3.0 average GPA for the admitted cohort. The grade distribution of students on college campuses across the United States can help to make this estimation.

The distribution of grades in America’s colleges is skewed heavily toward the higher end of the grading scale. In 2012, only 4 percent of students had GPAs of 0 (“F”) or 1.0 (“D”), 15 percent had a GPA of 2.0 (“C”), 33 percent had a GPA of 3.0 (“B”), and fully 45 percent had a GPA of 4.0 (“A”). The average GPA in 2013 was 3.15.<sup>41</sup>

With this distribution, an average GPA of 3.0 can easily be achieved with a minimum GPA of 2.75 if the distribution of applicants to teacher preparation programs mirrors that of the student body as a whole in terms of students with a 3.0 and 4.0 GPA, with the remaining 22 percent of students squeaking by with GPAs of exactly 2.75. In this situation, the average GPA of teacher candidates would be around 3.4.

Even if teacher preparation programs are not attracting a proportionate share of students with GPAs of 3.0 or 4.0 (a scenario that seems likely given what is known about the relative selectivity of teacher preparation), the teacher preparation program could still maintain an average GPA of 3.0 if it attracted even half as many high achievers as are found in the broader campus distribution. In this case, a minimum GPA of 2.75 still yields an average GPA of around 3.0, even if around 60 percent of the program’s applicants have the absolute lowest GPA of 2.75. As a result, it is plausible to use 2.75 as the minimum GPA that likely produces a program-level GPA average that allows the program to meet state or CAEP requirements.

Based on a benchmark of a required minimum GPA less than 3.0, we categorized programs’ likelihood of meeting individual and cohort average state and/or CAEP admissions requirements regarding GPA. In cases in which the cohort average of 3.0 is needed, programs that require prospective applicants to have at least a 2.75 GPA were categorized as “**likely meeting**” state or CAEP expectations; programs that accept a minimum GPA of 2.5 were designated as “**possibly meeting**” the expectations; and programs that accept candidates with lower than a 2.5 GPA were deemed as “**not likely meeting**” state or CAEP policy.

For the states that require an individual minimum GPA instead of or in addition to a cohort GPA, we used the individual GPA requirement to assess how likely a program was to meet state law. For example, because Pennsylvania requires at least an individual 3.0 GPA for program admission, we followed that policy instead of using the 2.75 GPA benchmark we used for programs in other states.

This study assessed 221 programs on their likelihood of meeting higher GPA admissions requirements.

41 Rojstaczer, S. *Recent GPA trends nationwide, four-year colleges and universities*. Retrieved August 11, 2016 from <http://www.gradeinflation.com/>

## Test score analysis

For programs in states requiring CAEP accreditation, CAEP Standard 3 requires that each program's cohort average be in the top 50th percentile of the score distribution for a nationally-normed test such as the SAT, ACT, or GRE. This same requirement is found in state law in Rhode Island and West Virginia.<sup>42</sup>

The national 50th percentile for students entering college in 2015 is a score of 20 on the ACT and 1006 on the SAT.<sup>43,44</sup>

To examine whether programs are well positioned to meet these requirements, we collected the institution average SAT and ACT scores for all undergraduate students, along with the percentage of students who provided each type of score. Data were obtained for school year 2013-2014, as reported in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). If test score data for an institution were unavailable in IPEDS, we used average SAT and ACT scores reported by the institution to the College Board on its Annual Survey of Colleges.<sup>45</sup> Institutions in the sample where score information was not available in either database were not assessed on the testing standard. This study assessed 126 programs on their likelihood of meeting rigorous testing admissions requirements.

Since no publicly available data provide the test score averages for teacher preparation candidates, we examined institution-wide data. While imperfect, this works in favor of programs due to the well-documented data that shows students who plan to major in education generally score lower on standardized tests than their peers who intend to study different disciplines.<sup>46</sup>

For almost all institutions in this analysis, the higher reported score between the ACT and SAT was used to classify programs as “**likely meeting**” or “**not likely meeting**” the established CAEP and/or state requirement. The exceptions were in institutions with a difference of more than 75 percentage points in the rates of test scores submitted by program candidates (e.g., 10 percent submit SAT scores, 90 percent submit ACT scores). In these cases, the test score data of the test taken by more candidates were used. This affected a small number of programs in our sample.

42 Utah also has a rigorous testing requirement within its admissions policy, but the state sets individual minimum ACT or SAT scores as opposed to a cohort average benchmark. Additionally, the state allows candidates to qualify for admission through either the GPA or test requirement.

43 ACT. *National distributions of cumulative percents for ACT scores: ACT-tested high school graduates from 2013, 2014, and 2015*. Retrieved from <http://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/NormsChartM-CandComposite-Web2015-16.pdf>

44 College Board. (2015). *SAT percentile ranks for males, females, and total group*. Retrieved from <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/sat/sat-percentile-ranks-composite-crit-reading-math-2015.pdf>

45 Test score data from the College Board on its Annual Survey of Colleges were used only if an institution could report score data for more than 50 percent of the student body.

46 College Board. (2014). *2014 College-bound seniors total group profile report*. Retrieved from <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/sat/TotalGroup-2014.pdf>, 13.

## Analysis of both standards

As CAEP Standard 3 and state policy in Rhode Island and West Virginia require programs to meet both the GPA and testing requirements as part of their raised bar for admission, we also examined how well positioned programs are to meet requirements based on both GPA and test score considerations. This portion of the analysis assessed a total of 126 programs.





## Appendix A

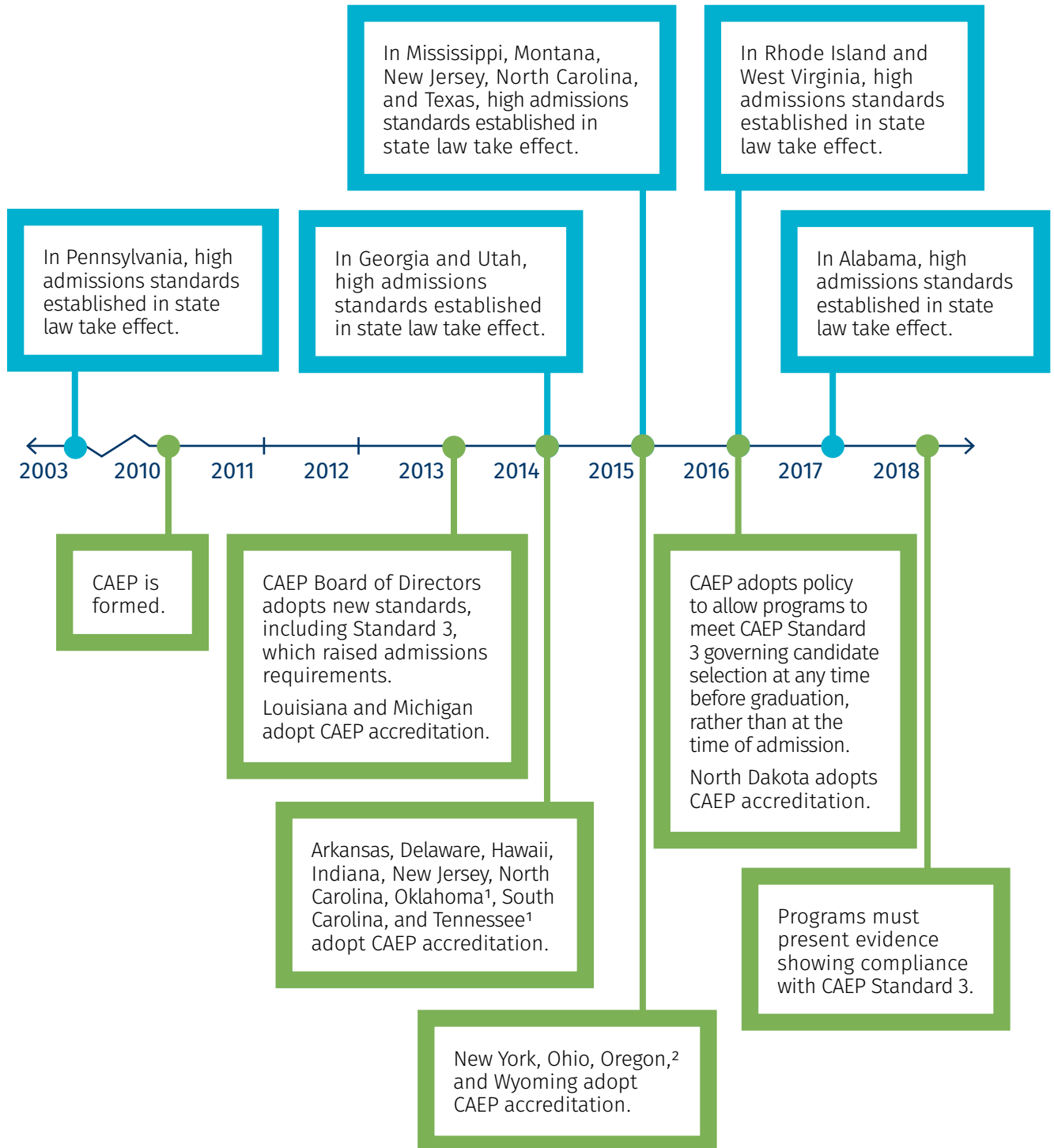
### What's left: States' current admissions policies after CAEP's selection standard change

State	State GPA requirements for preparation program admissions	State testing requirements for preparation program admissions
Arkansas	None	None Arkansas delays its basic skills assessment until teacher candidates are ready to apply for licensure.
Delaware <sup>1</sup>	3.0 individual GPA or a GPA in the "top 50th percentile for coursework completed during the most recent two years of the applicant's general education." Delaware allows candidates to qualify by meeting either the GPA or test requirement.	A test taken by and normed to the general college-bound population is one option for candidates to fulfill admissions requirements. But Delaware provides a loophole by accepting a basic skills test normed to the prospective teacher population as evidence of fulfilling this requirement. Delaware allows candidates to qualify by meeting either the GPA or test requirement.
Hawaii	None	A basic skills test Candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the SAT or ACT can be exempted, along with those who possess a bachelor's degree.
Indiana	None	A basic skills test Teacher preparation programs can exempt candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the SAT, ACT, or GRE, or hold a master's degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution.
Louisiana	2.2 individual minimum	A basic skills test Teacher preparation programs can exempt candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the SAT or ACT.
Michigan	None	None Michigan delays its basic skills assessment until student teaching.
New York	None	None New York delays its basic skills assessment until teacher candidates are ready to apply for licensure.
North Dakota	None	None North Dakota delays its basic skills assessment until teacher candidates are ready to apply for licensure.
Ohio	None	None
Oklahoma	3.0 individual minimum in all liberal arts and science courses (minimum of 20 hours) Oklahoma allows candidates to qualify by meeting either the GPA or test requirement.	A basic skills test Oklahoma allows candidates to qualify by meeting either the GPA or test requirement.
Oregon	None	None Oregon delays its basic skills assessment until teacher candidates are ready to apply for licensure.
South Carolina <sup>2</sup>	2.75 individual minimum	A basic skills test Teacher preparation programs can exempt candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the SAT or ACT.
Tennessee	2.75 individual minimum	A basic skills test Teacher preparation programs can exempt candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the SAT or ACT.
Wyoming	None	None

1. Delaware allows a waiver whereby institutions can admit up to 10 percent of a candidate cohort that does not meet the admissions requirements.
2. South Carolina allows no more than 5 percent of applicants to a given institution to be admitted with a GPA waiver.

## Appendix B

### Timeline of adoption of high admissions standards in state policy or CAEP requirements



1. Programs must fully comply with CAEP accreditation requirement by 2016.  
 2. Programs must fully comply with CAEP accreditation requirement by 2022.

Note: Years when programs are expected to comply with CAEP requirements, wherever explicitly noted in state policy, are listed above.

## Appendix C

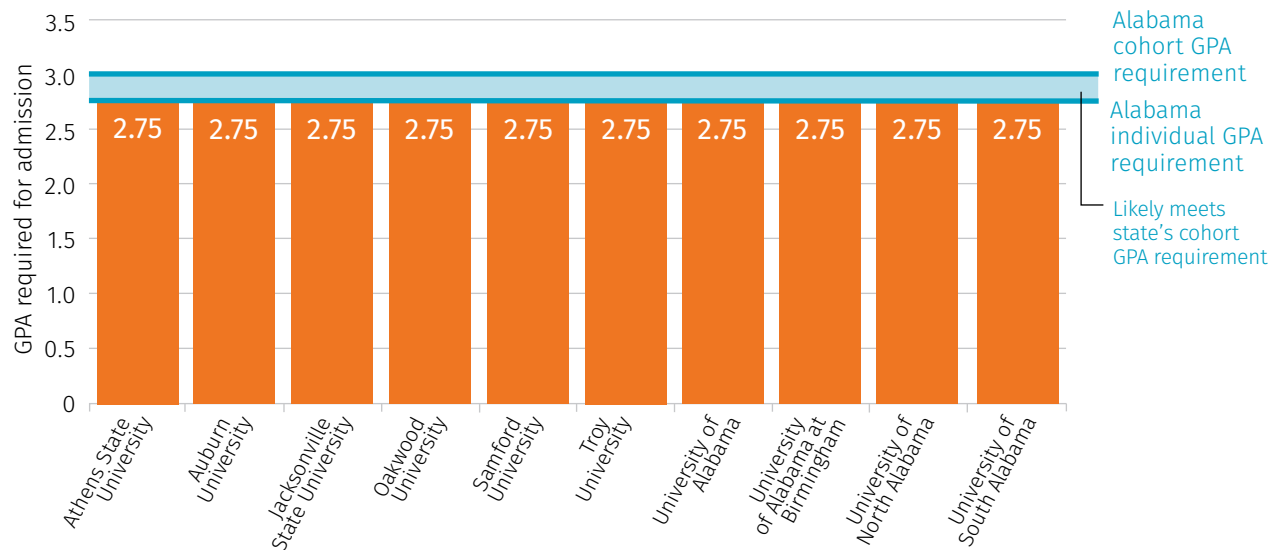
### State summaries

#### Alabama

##### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law	
GPA	Testing
2.75 individual minimum; 3.0 cohort average These requirements take effect in fall 2017.	A basic skills test

##### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry

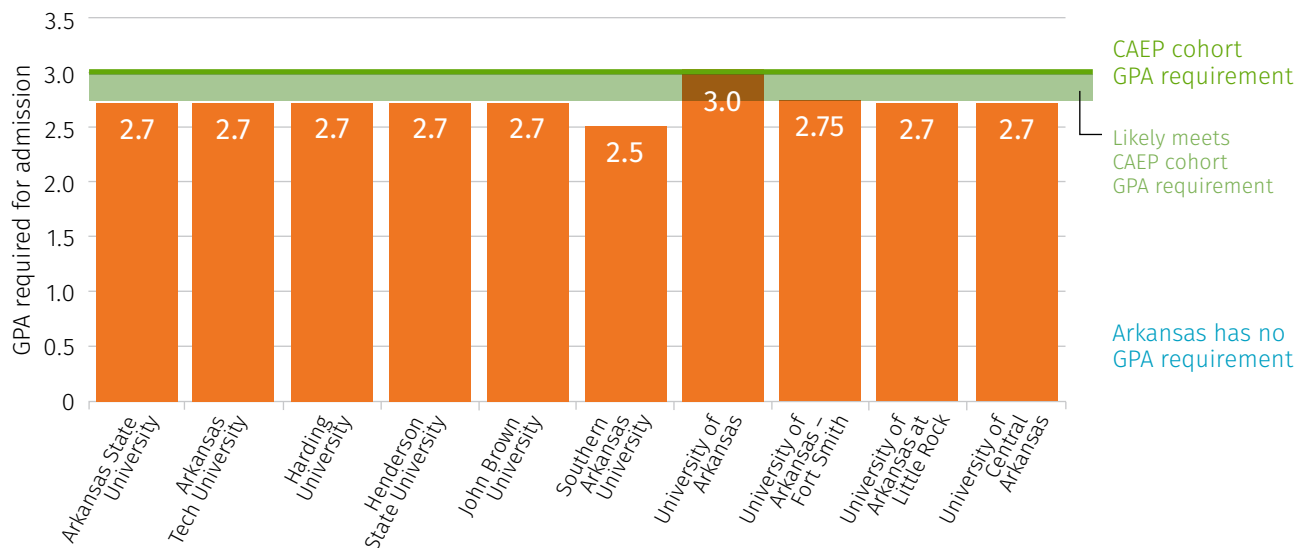


## Arkansas

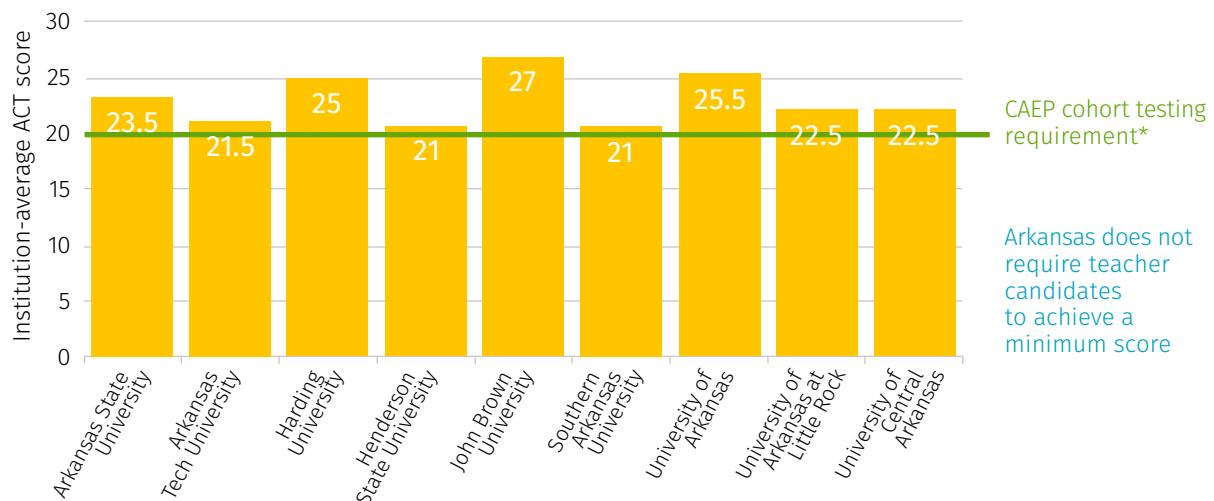
### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law		Requirements in CAEP standards	
GPA	Testing	GPA	Testing
None	None Arkansas delays its basic skills assessment until teacher candidates are ready to apply for licensure.	3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile

### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



### Programs' likelihood of meeting testing admissions requirements at the point of entry



\* For the ACT, the national 50th percentile for students entering college in 2015 was a score of 20.

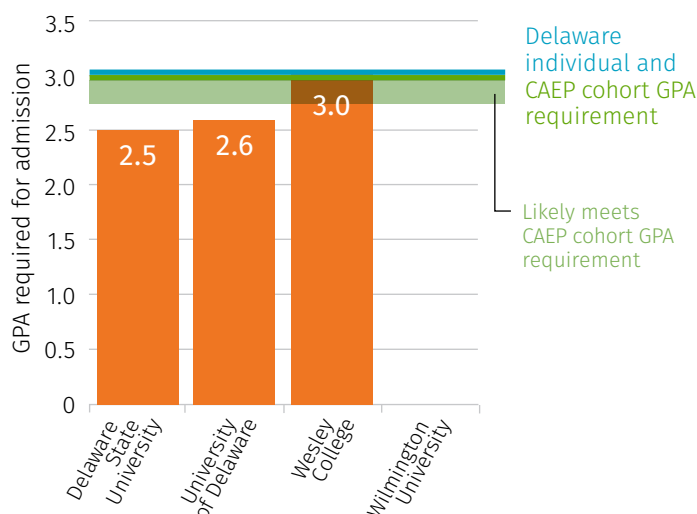
Note: The University of Arkansas – Fort Smith is not included because testing data are not available.



Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

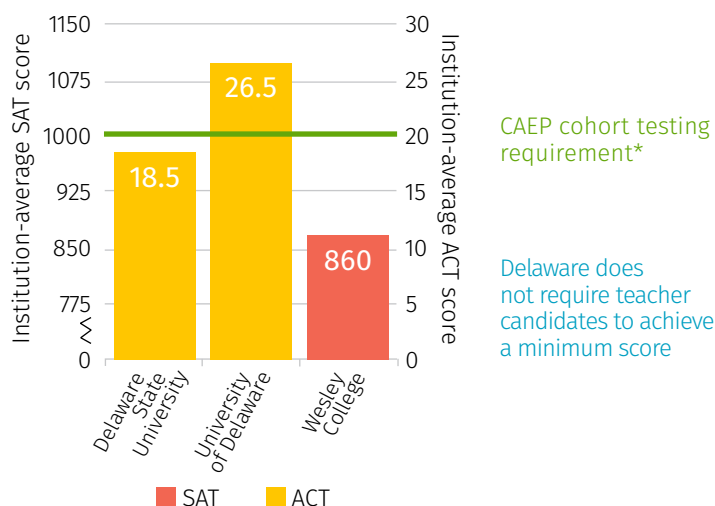
Requirements in state law		Requirements in CAEP standards	
GPA	Testing	GPA	Testing
3.0 individual GPA or a GPA in the “top 50th percentile for course-work completed during the most recent two years of the applicant’s general education.”	A test taken by and normed to the general college-bound population is one option for candidates to fulfill admissions requirements. But Delaware provides a loophole by accepting a basic skills test normed to the prospective teacher population as evidence of fulfilling this requirement.	3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile
Delaware allows candidates to qualify by meeting either the GPA or test requirement. There is a waiver clause whereby institutions can admit up to 10% of a candidate cohort that do not meet the admissions requirements.			

Programs’ likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



Note: Delaware allows candidates to qualify by meeting either the GPA or test requirement.

Programs’ likelihood of meeting testing admissions requirements at the point of entry



\* For the ACT, the national 50th percentile for students entering college in 2015 was a score of 20; for the SAT, it was a score of 1006.

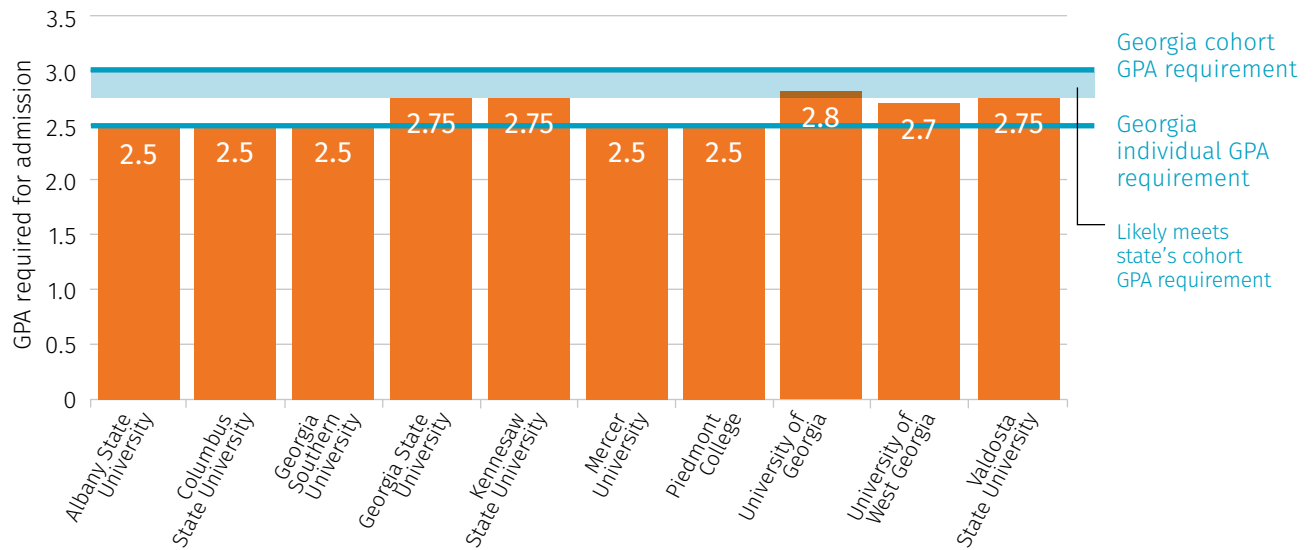
Note: Delaware allows candidates to qualify by meeting either the GPA or test requirement. Wilmington University is not included because testing data are not available.

## Georgia

### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law	
GPA	Testing
2.5 individual minimum; 3.0 cohort average Georgia allows a waiver whereby institutions can admit up to 10 percent of a candidate cohort that do not meet the admissions requirements.	A basic skills test Teacher preparation programs can exempt candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the SAT, ACT, or GRE.

### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry

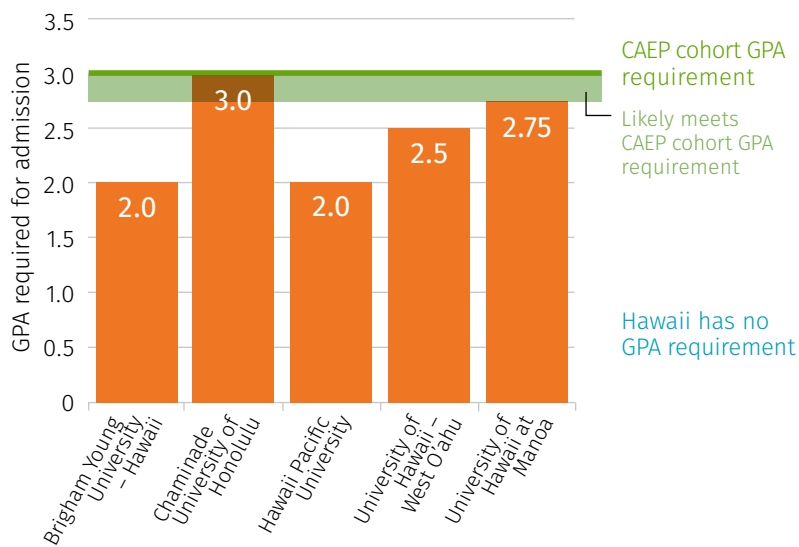


## Hawaii

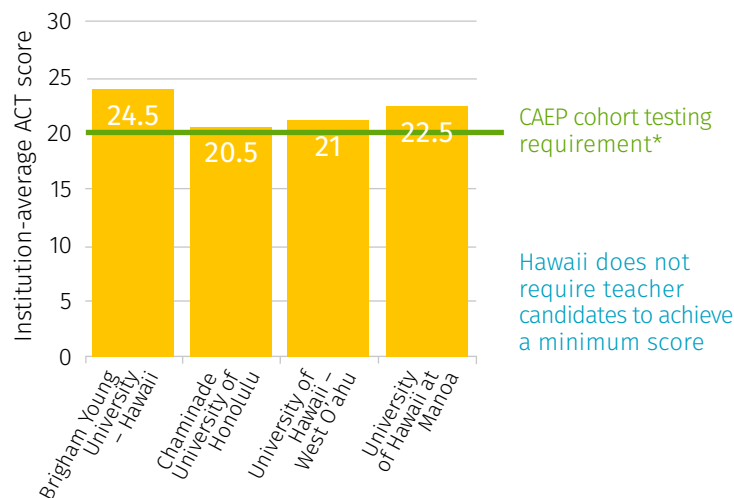
### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law		Requirements in CAEP standards	
GPA	Testing	GPA	Testing
None	A basic skills test Candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the SAT or ACT can be exempted, along with those who possess a bachelor's degree.	3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile

### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



### Programs' likelihood of meeting testing admissions requirements at the point of entry



\* For the ACT, the national 50th percentile for students entering college in 2015 was a score of 20.

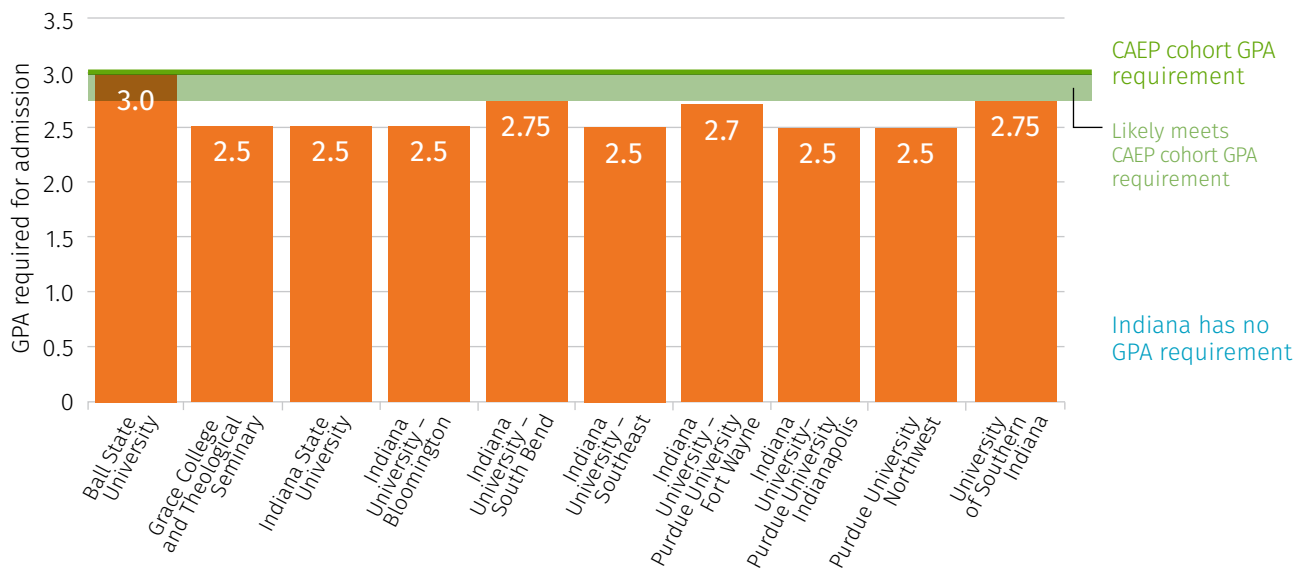
Note: Hawaii Pacific University is not included because testing data are not available.

## Indiana

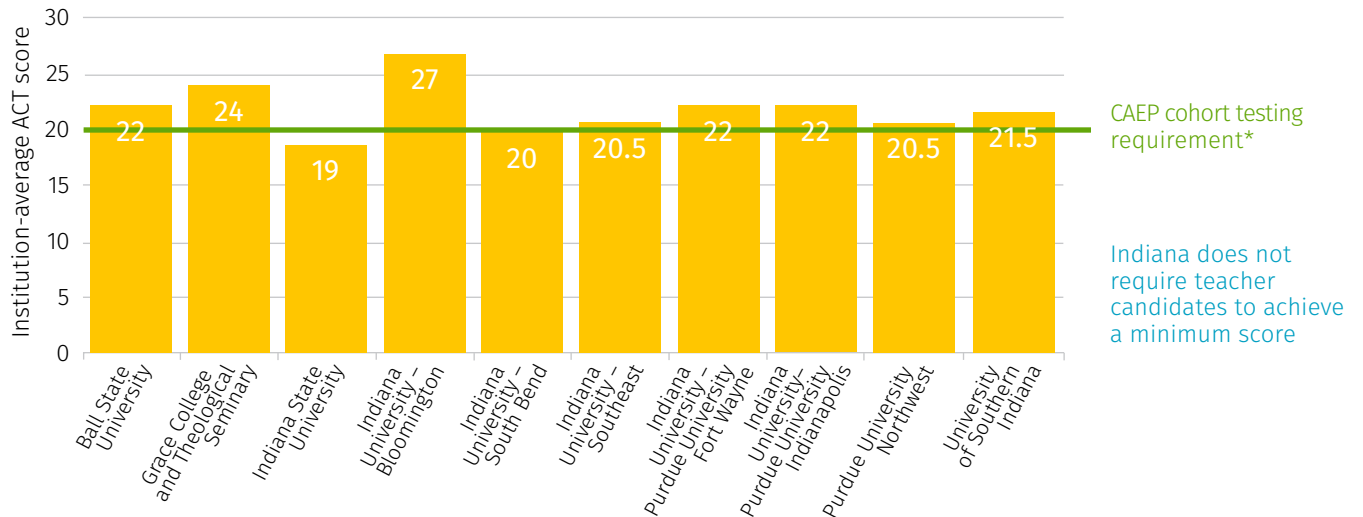
### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law		Requirements in CAEP standards	
GPA	Testing	GPA	Testing
None	A basic skills test Teacher preparation programs can exempt candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the SAT, ACT, or GRE, or hold a master’s degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution.	3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile

### Programs’ likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



### Programs’ likelihood of meeting testing admissions requirements at the point of entry



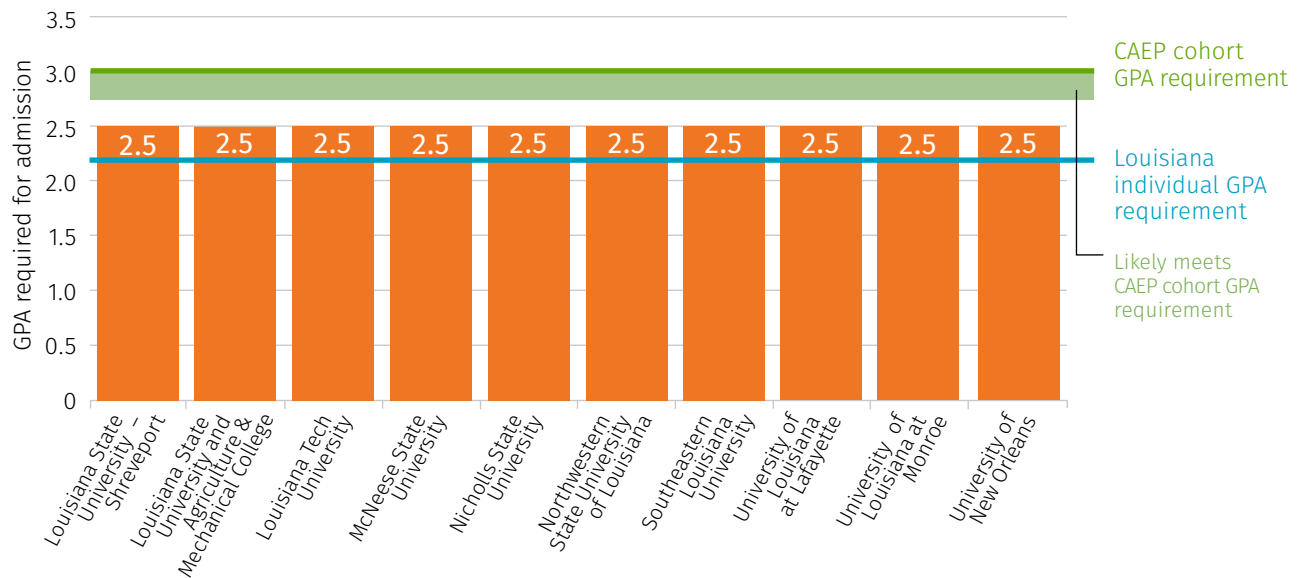
\* For the ACT, the national 50th percentile for students entering college in 2015 was a score of 20.

## Louisiana

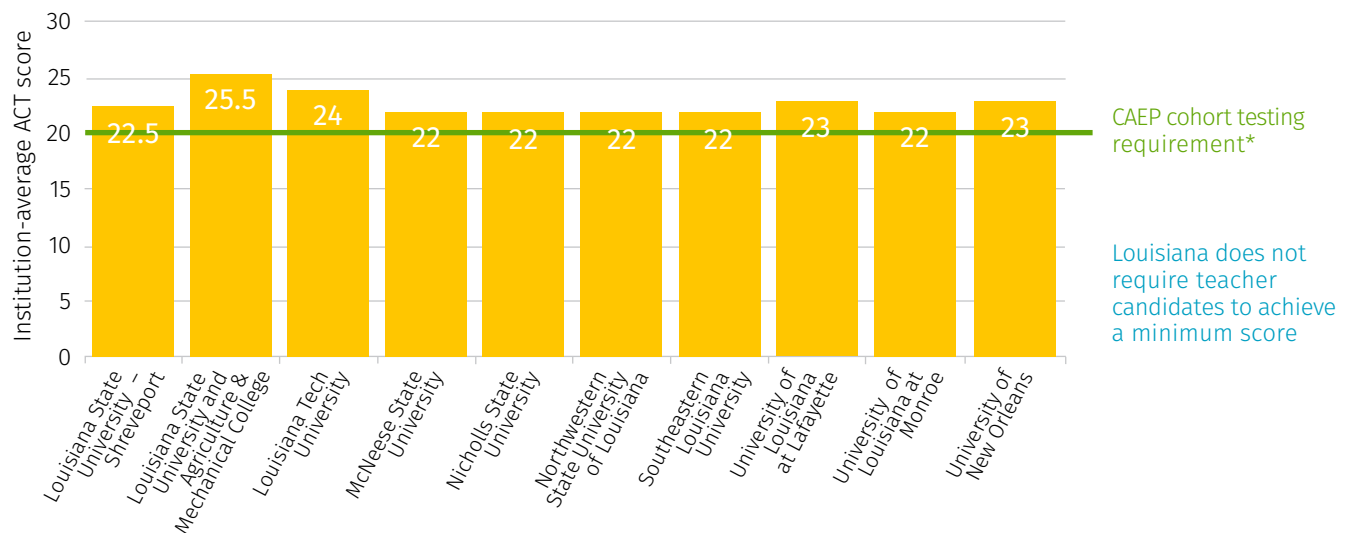
### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law		Requirements in CAEP standards	
GPA	Testing	GPA	Testing
2.2 individual minimum	A basic skills test Teacher preparation programs can exempt candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the SAT or ACT.	3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile

### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



### Programs' likelihood of meeting testing admissions requirements at the point of entry



\* For the ACT, the national 50th percentile for students entering college in 2015 was a score of 20.

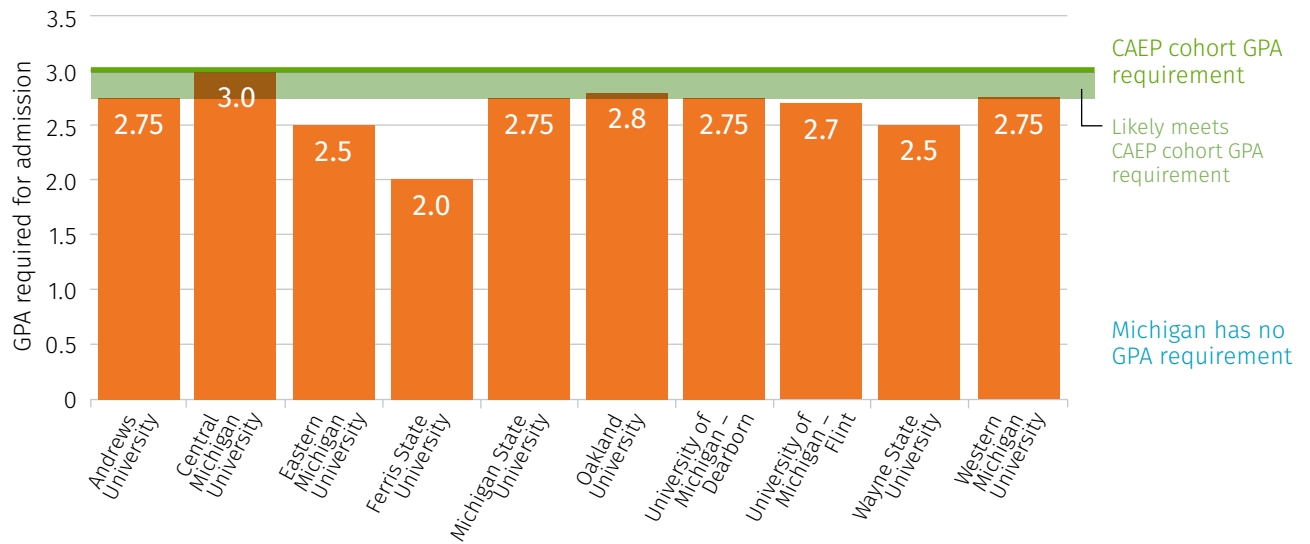


## Michigan

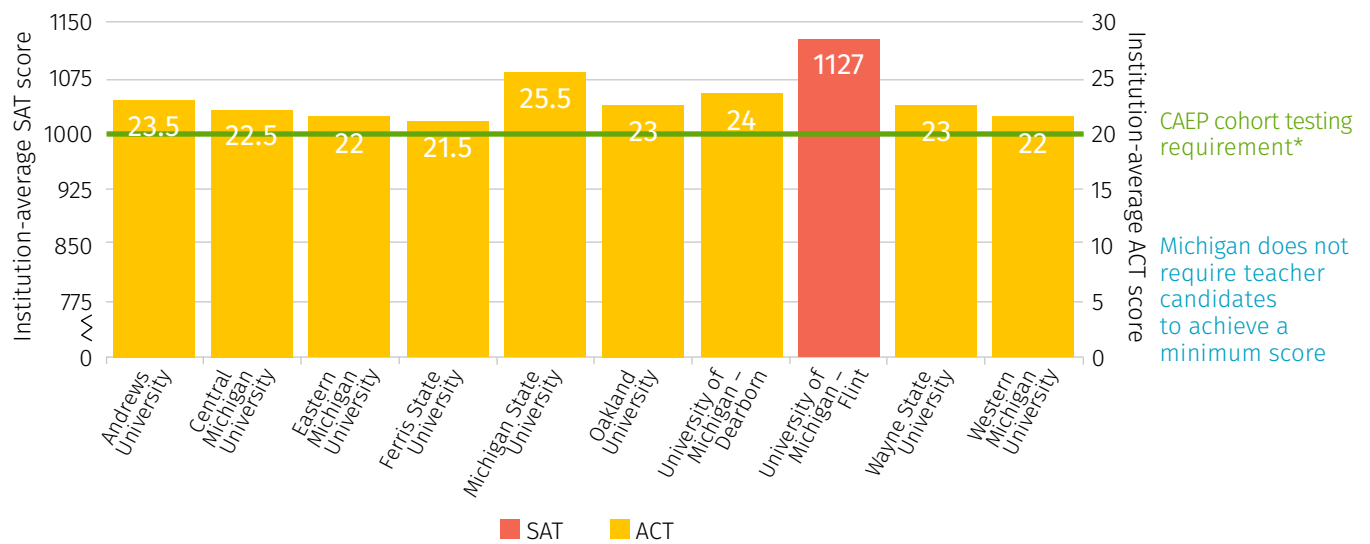
### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law		Requirements in CAEP standards	
GPA	Testing	GPA	Testing
None	None Michigan delays its basic skills assessment until student teaching.	3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile

### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



### Programs' likelihood of meeting testing admissions requirements at the point of entry



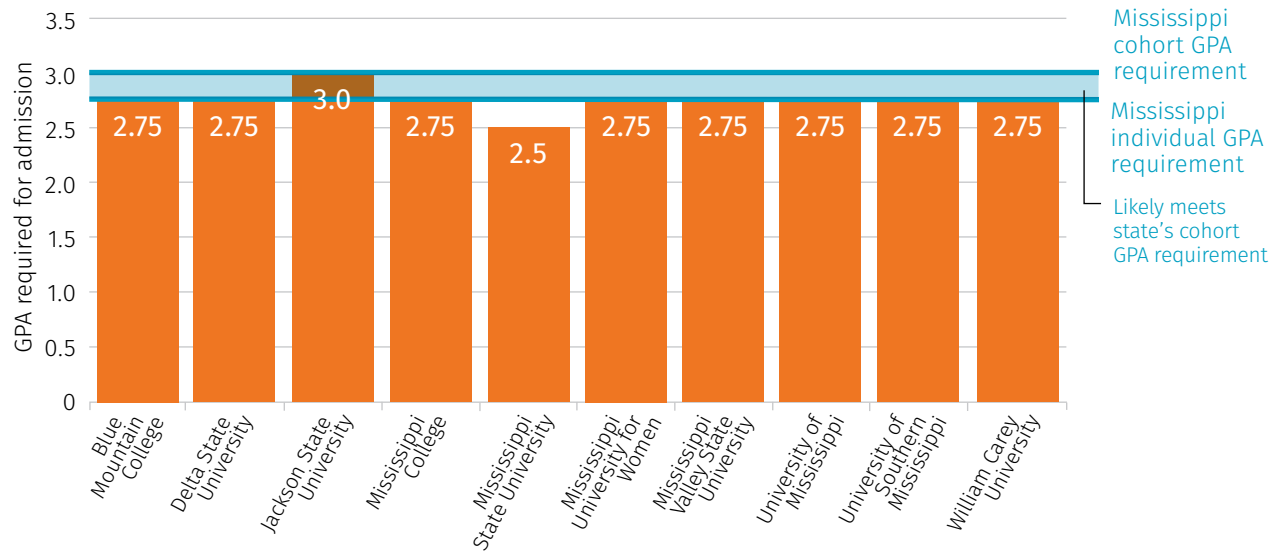
\* For the ACT, the national 50th percentile for students entering college in 2015 was a score of 20; for the SAT, it was a score of 1006.

## Mississippi

### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law	
GPA	Testing
2.75 individual minimum; 3.0 cohort average	A basic skills test Teacher preparation programs can exempt candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the ACT.

### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry

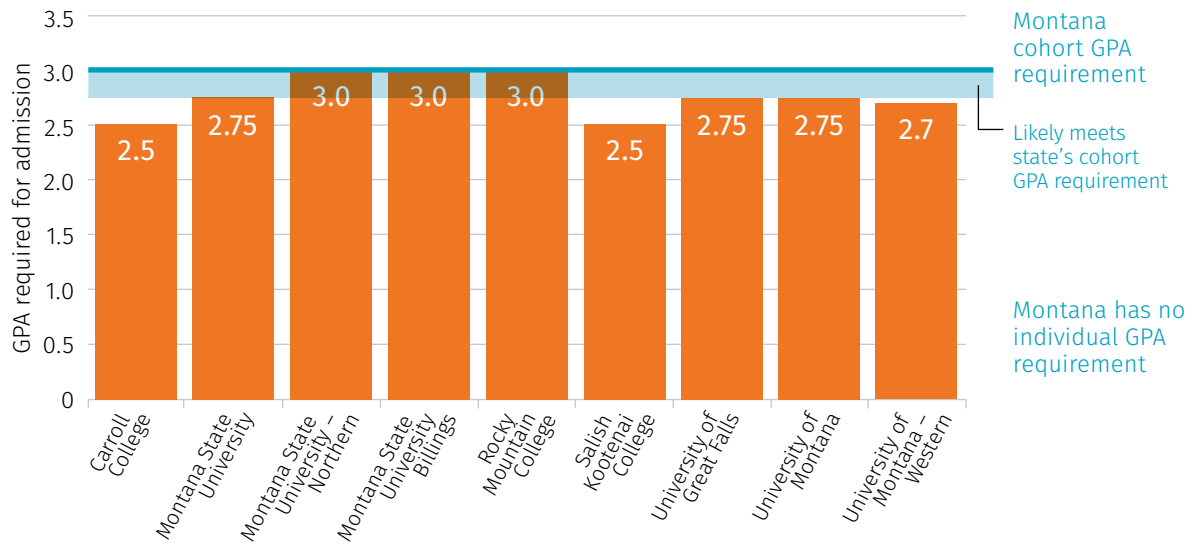


## Montana

### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law	
GPA	Testing
3.0 cohort average	None

### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry

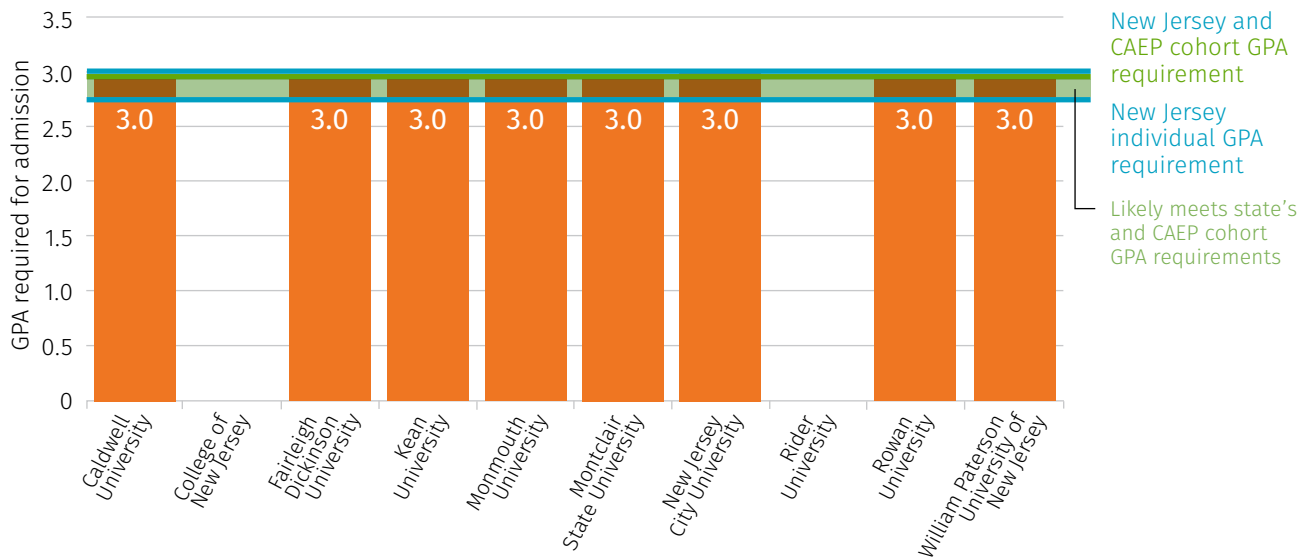


## New Jersey

### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law		Requirements in CAEP standards	
GPA	Testing	GPA	Testing
2.75 individual minimum; 3.0 cohort average	A basic skills test Teacher preparation programs can exempt candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the SAT, ACT, or GRE.	3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile

### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



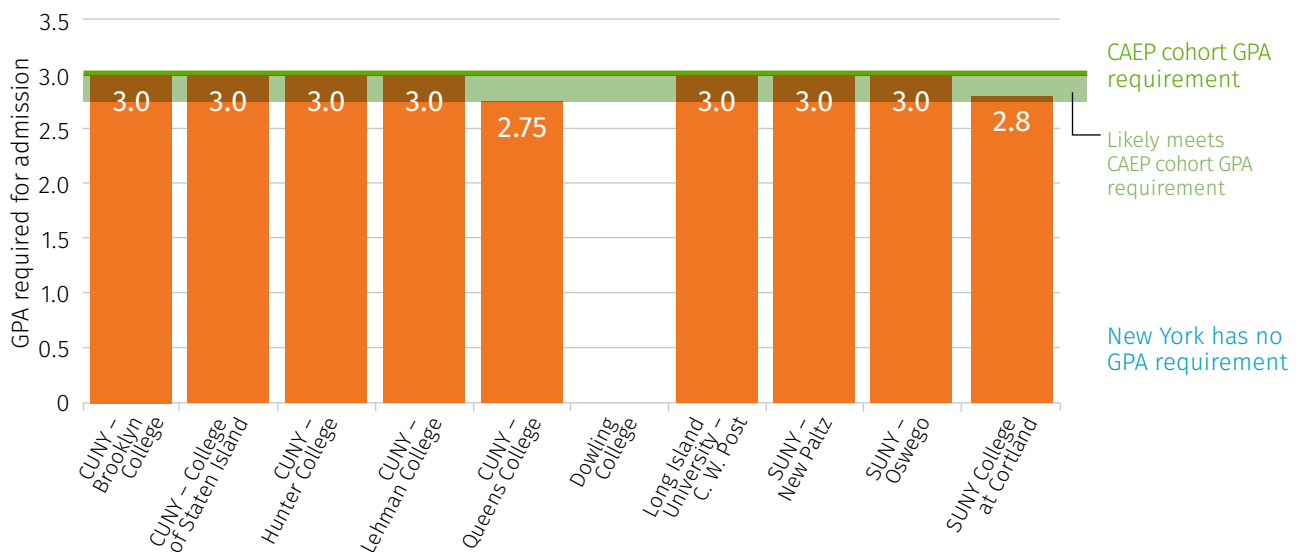
Note: New Jersey has a high GPA requirement in state law but also requires CAEP accreditation. For the purposes of this analysis, only its programs' compliance with state law is considered.

## New York

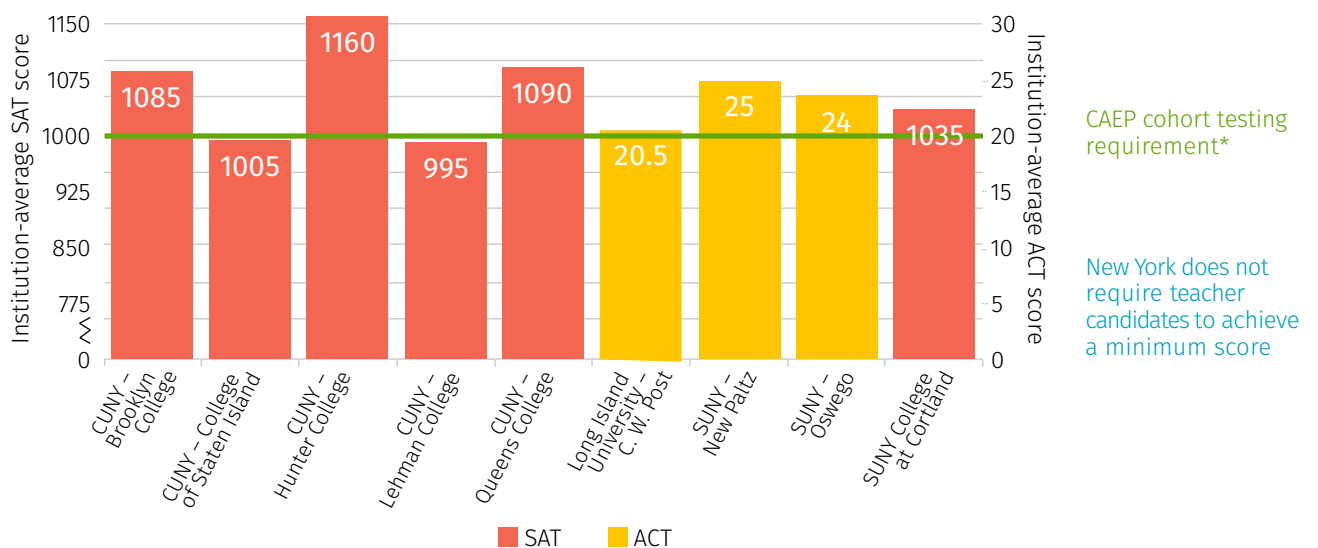
### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law		Requirements in CAEP standards	
GPA	Testing	GPA	Testing
None	None New York delays its basic skills assessment until teacher candidates are ready to apply for licensure.	3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile

### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



### Programs' likelihood of meeting testing admissions requirements at the point of entry



\* For the ACT, the national 50th percentile for students entering college in 2015 was a score of 20; for the SAT, it was a score of 1006.

Note: Dowling College is not included because testing data are not available.

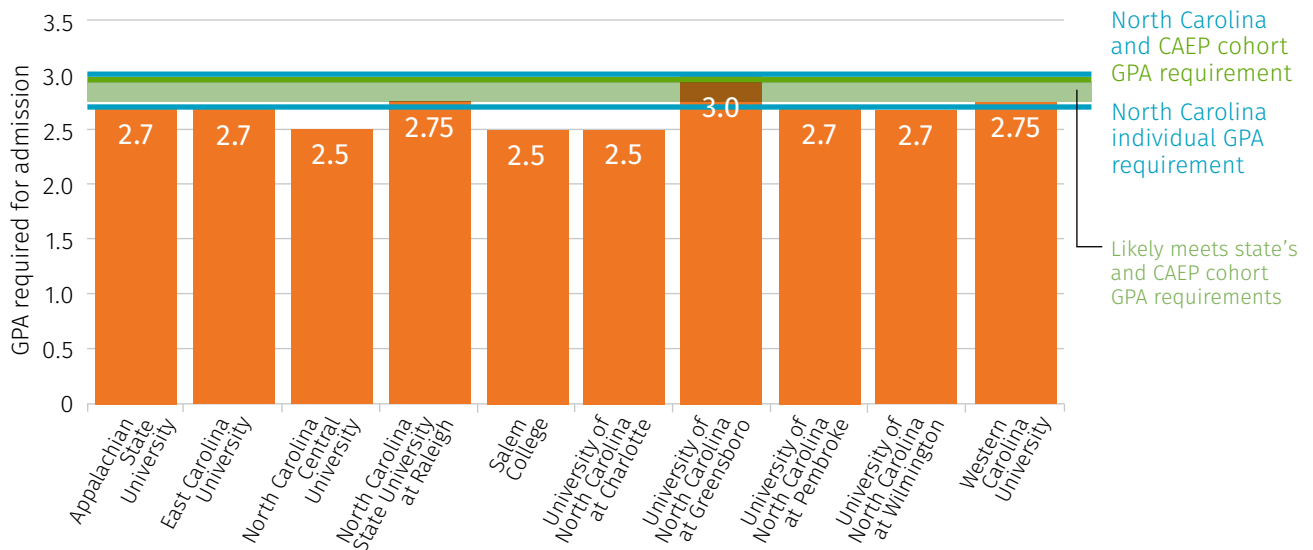


## North Carolina

### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law		Requirements in CAEP standards	
GPA	Testing	GPA	Testing
2.7 individual minimum; 3.0 cohort average	A basic skills test Teacher preparation programs can exempt candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the SAT or ACT.	3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile

### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



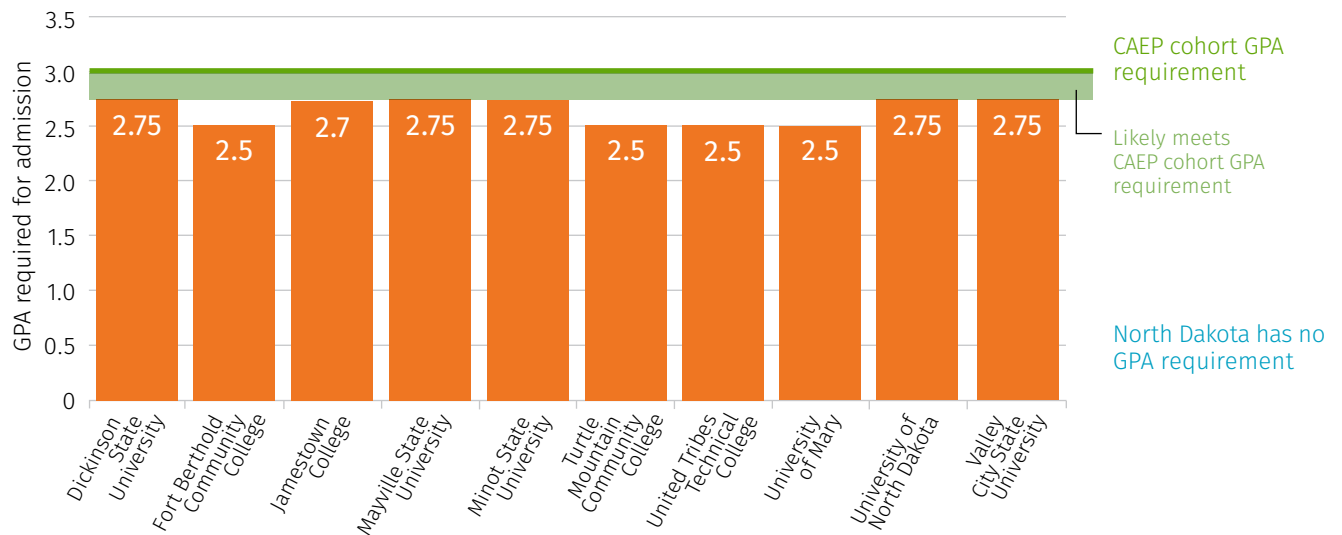
Note: North Carolina has a high GPA requirement in state law but also requires CAEP accreditation. For the purposes of this analysis, only its programs' compliance with state law is considered.

## North Dakota

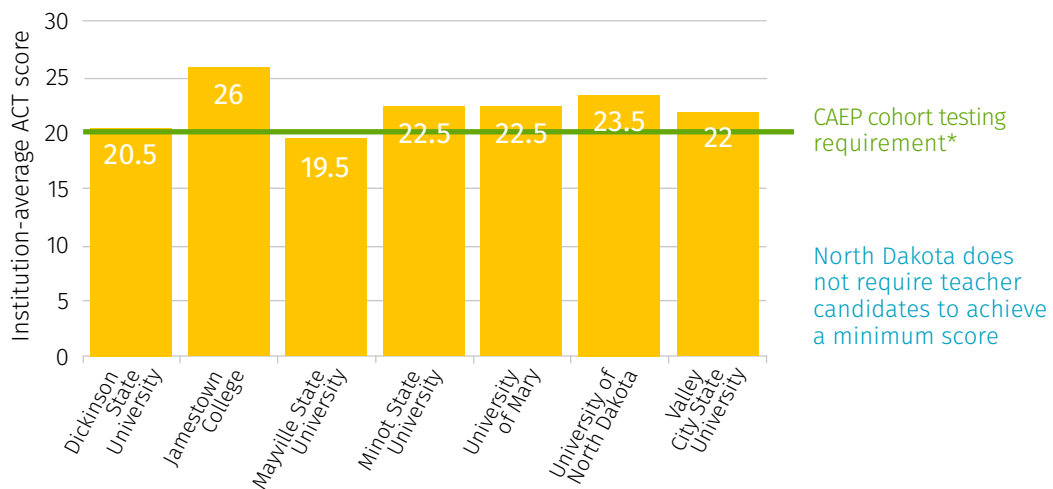
### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law		Requirements in CAEP standards	
GPA	Testing	GPA	Testing
None	None North Dakota delays its basic skills assessment until teacher candidates are ready to apply for licensure.	3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile

### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



### Programs' likelihood of meeting testing admissions requirements at the point of entry



\* For the ACT, the national 50th percentile for students entering college in 2015 was a score of 20.

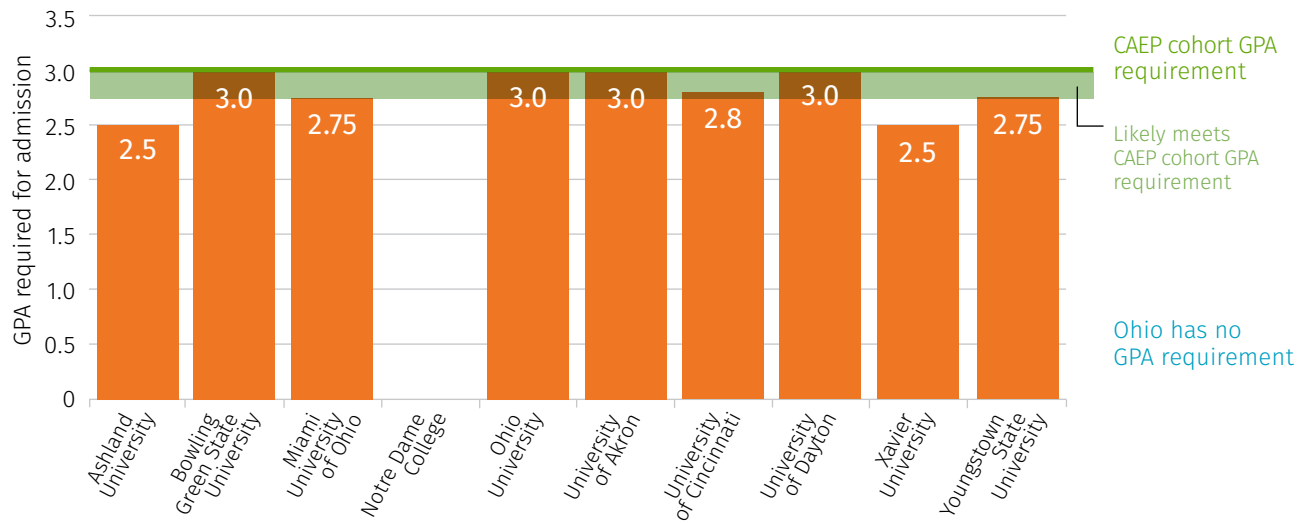
Note: Turtle Mountain Community College, Fort Berthold Community College, and United Tribes Technical College are not included because testing data are not available.

## Ohio

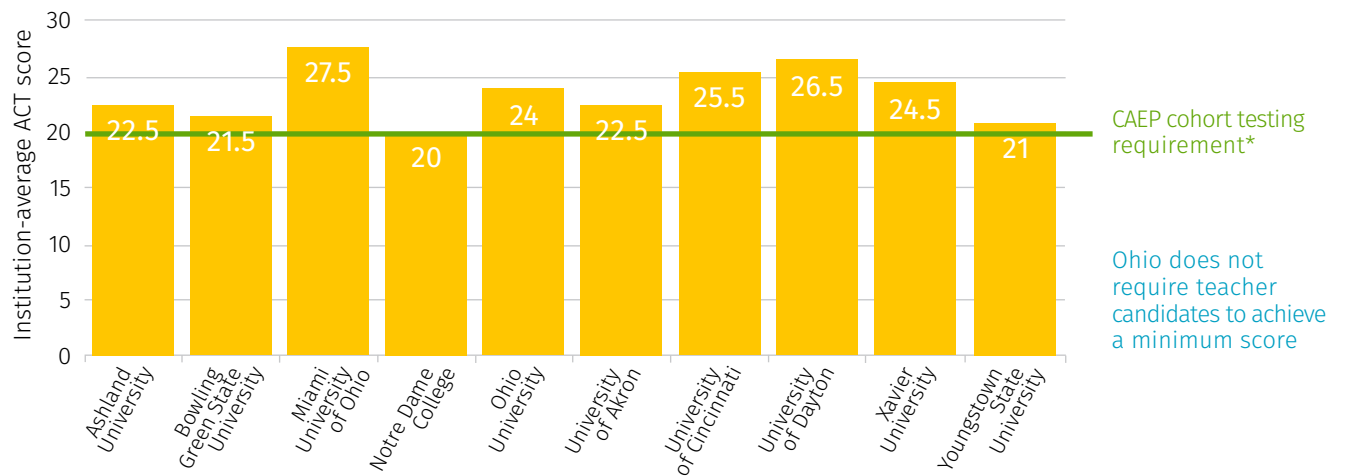
### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law		Requirements in CAEP standards	
GPA	Testing	GPA	Testing
None	None	3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile

#### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



#### Programs' likelihood of meeting testing admissions requirements at the point of entry



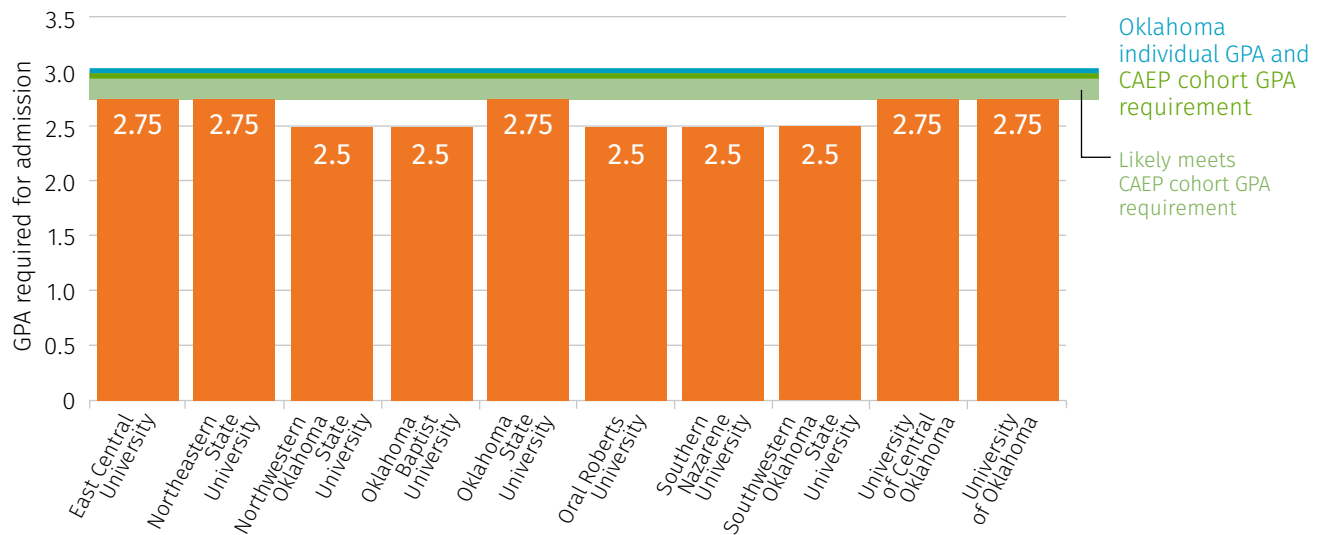
\* For the ACT, the national 50th percentile for students entering college in 2015 was a score of 20.

## Oklahoma

### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

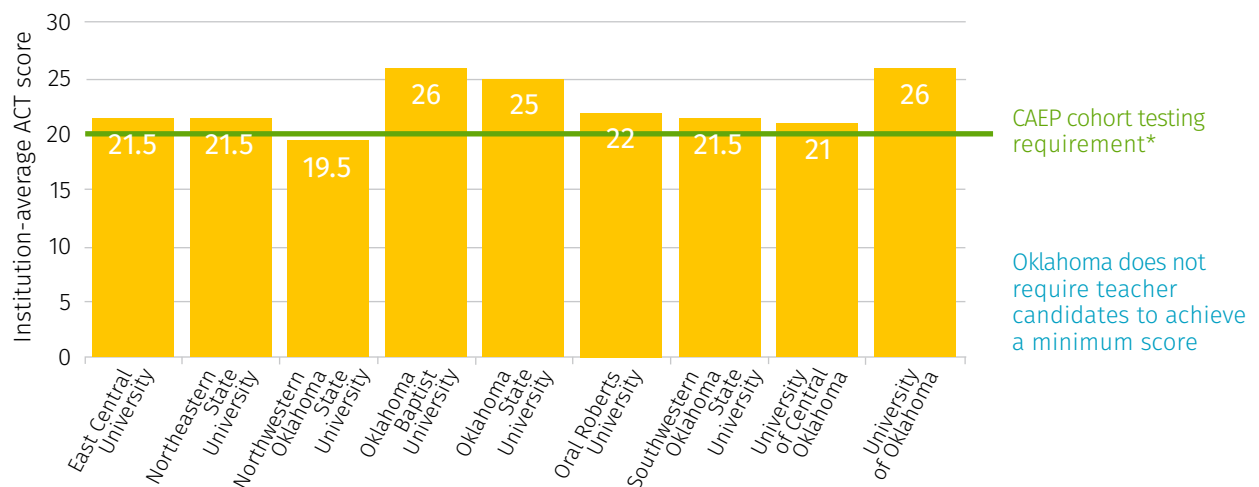
Requirements in state law		Requirements in CAEP standards	
GPA	Testing	GPA	Testing
3.0 individual minimum in all liberal arts and science courses (minimum of 20 hours)	A basic skills test	3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile
Oklahoma allows candidates to qualify by meeting either the GPA or test requirement.			

### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



Note: Oklahoma allows candidates to qualify by meeting either the GPA or test requirement.

### Programs' likelihood of meeting testing admissions requirements at the point of entry



\* For the ACT, the national 50th percentile for students entering college in 2015 was a score of 20.

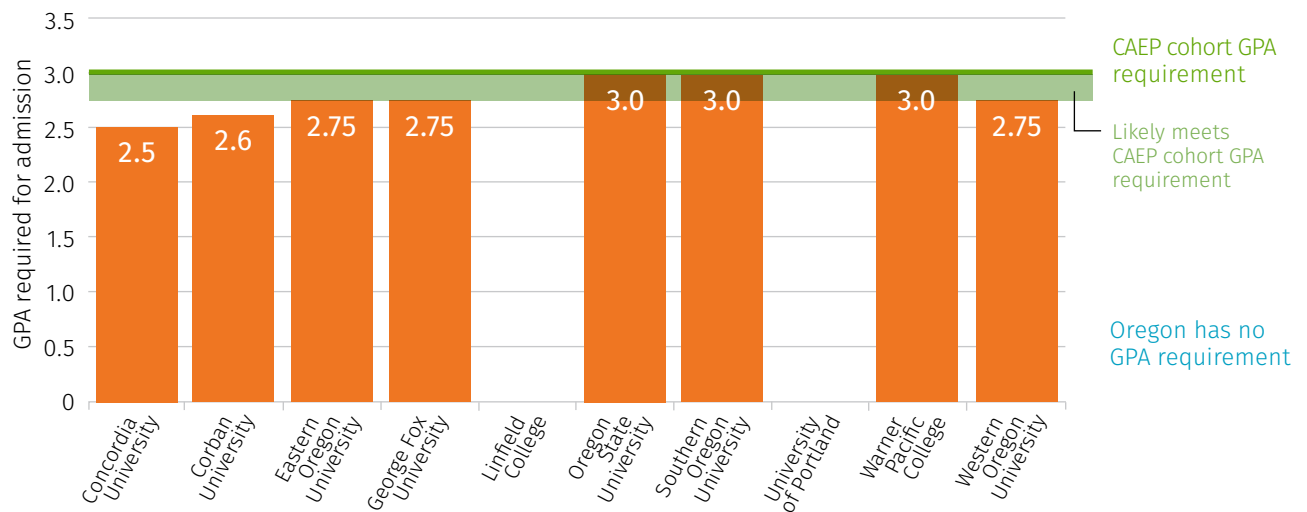
Note: Oklahoma allows candidates to qualify by meeting either the GPA or test requirement. Southern Nazarene University is not included because testing data are not available.

## Oregon

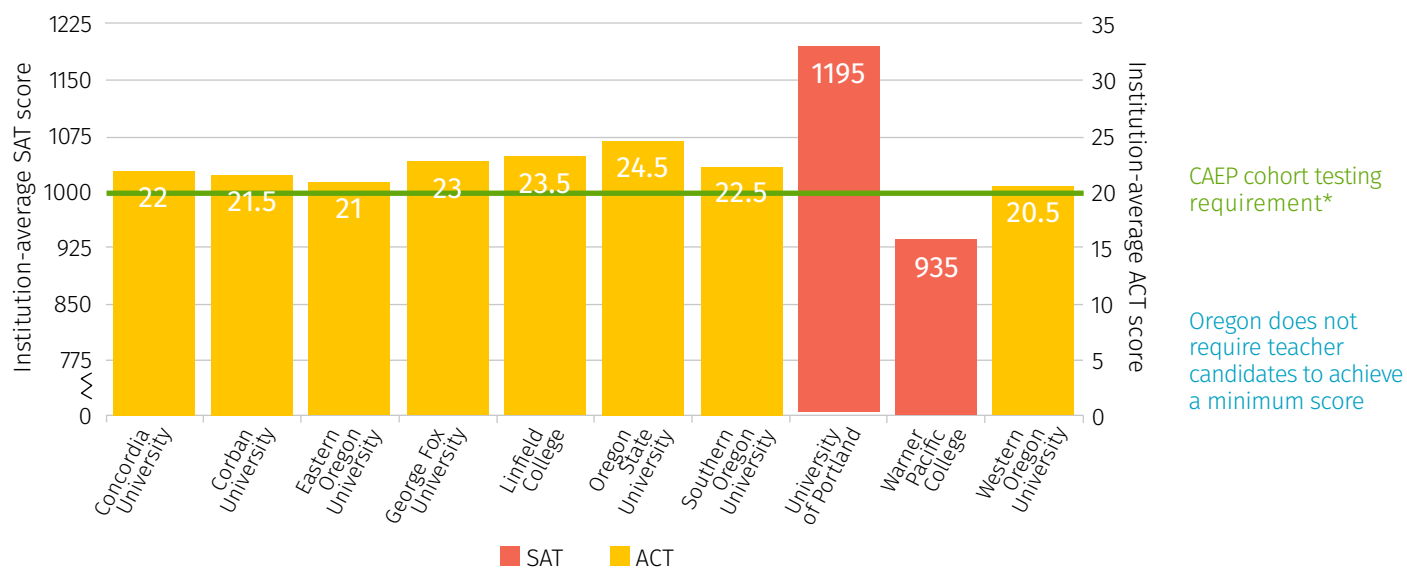
### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law		Requirements in CAEP standards	
GPA	Testing	GPA	Testing
None	None Oregon delays its basic skills assessment until teacher candidates are ready to apply for licensure.	3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile

### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



### Programs' likelihood of meeting testing admissions requirements at the point of entry



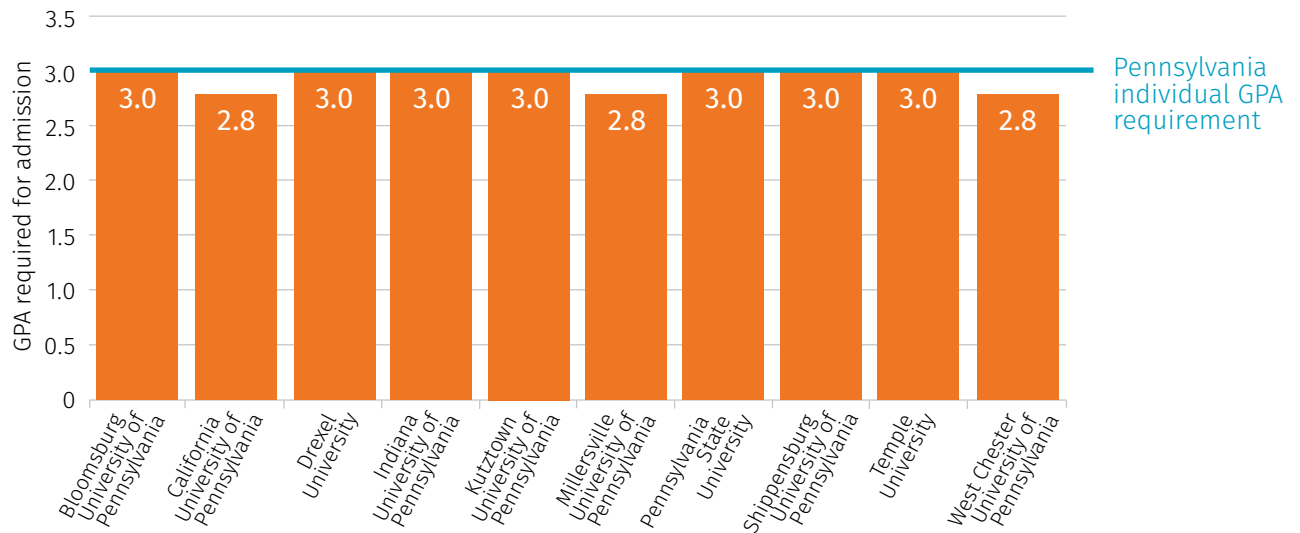
\* For the ACT, the national 50th percentile for students entering college in 2015 was a score of 20; for the SAT, it was a score of 1006.

## Pennsylvania

### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law	
GPA	Testing
3.0 individual minimum; programs may admit applicants with a 2.8 GPA and qualifying scores on the basic skills test or SAT/ACT.	A basic skills test Teacher preparation programs can exempt candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the SAT or ACT.

### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



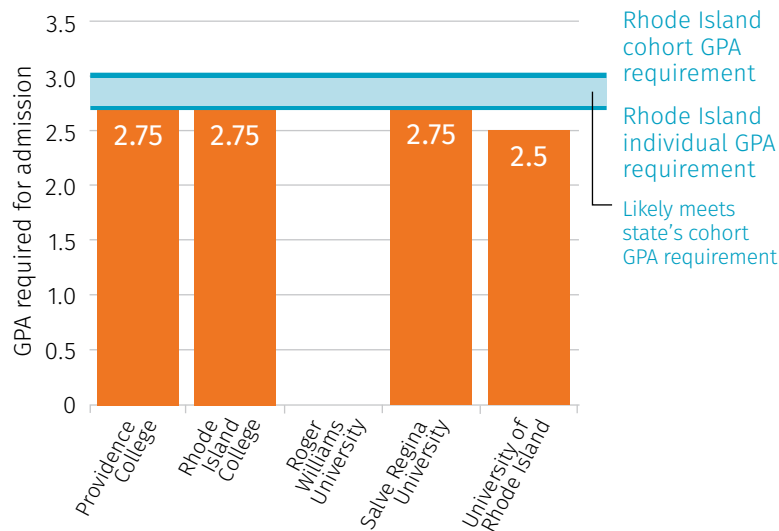


## Rhode Island

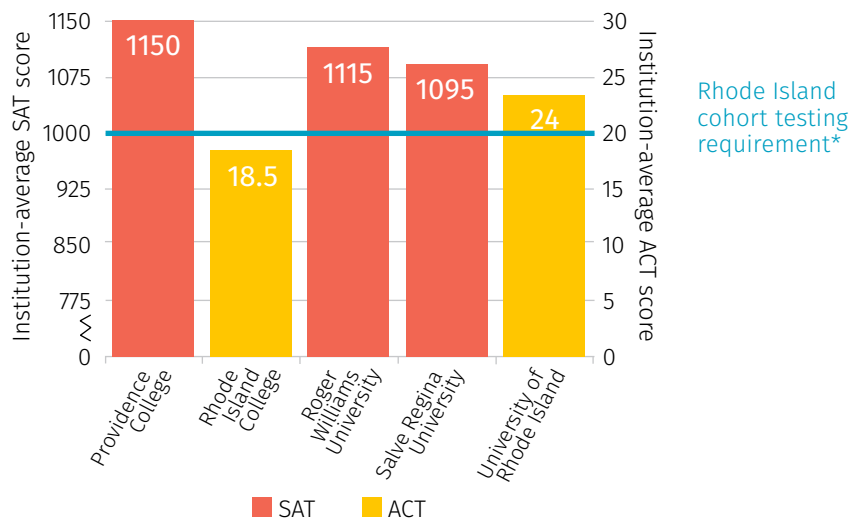
### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law	
GPA	Testing
2.75 individual minimum; 3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile
State allows programs, in rare instances and with state approval, to offer conditional acceptance to candidates not meeting requirements, provided they receive appropriate support.	

#### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



#### Programs' likelihood of meeting testing admissions requirements at the point of entry



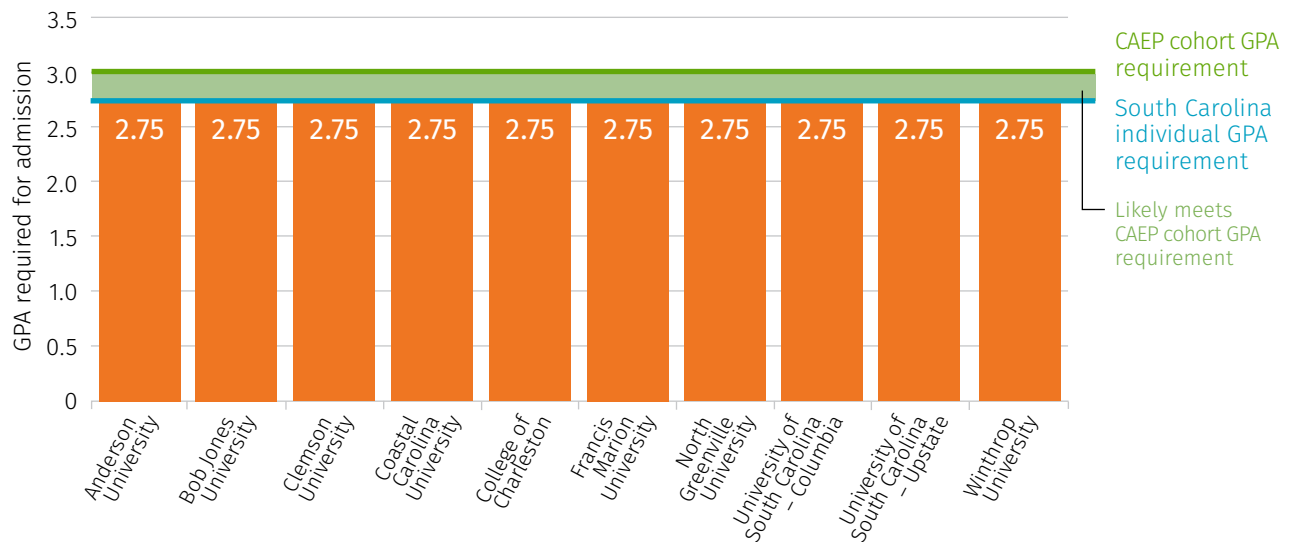
\* For the ACT, the national 50th percentile for students entering college in 2015 was a score of 20; for the SAT, it was a score of 1006.

## South Carolina

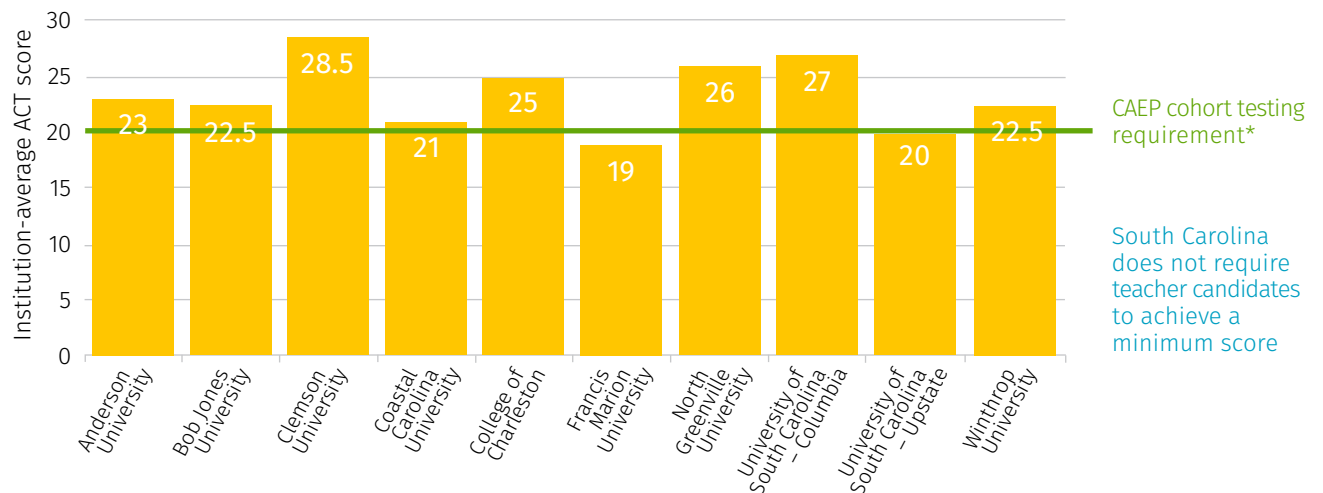
### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law		Requirements in CAEP standards	
GPA	Testing	GPA	Testing
2.75 individual minimum The state allows no more than 5 percent of applicants to a given institution to be admitted with a GPA waiver.	A basic skills test Teacher preparation programs can exempt candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the SAT or ACT.	3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile

### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



### Programs' likelihood of meeting testing admissions requirements at the point of entry



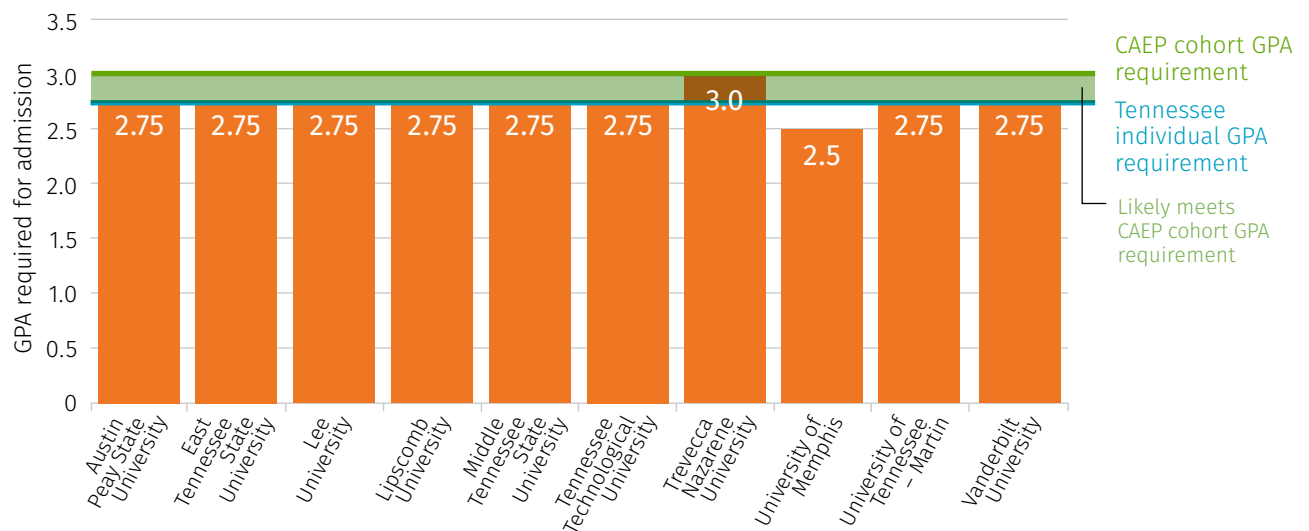
\* For the ACT, the national 50th percentile for students entering college in 2015 was a score of 20.

## Tennessee

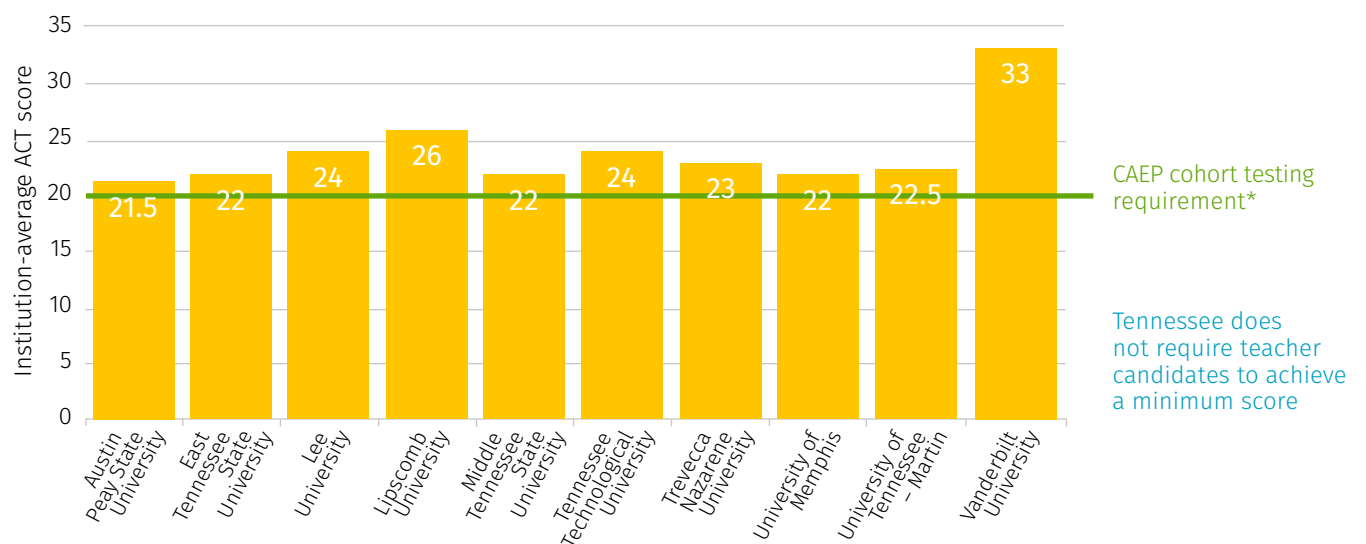
### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law		Requirements in CAEP standards	
GPA	Testing	GPA	Testing
2.75 individual minimum	A basic skills test Teacher preparation programs can exempt candidates who demonstrate equivalent performance on the SAT or ACT.	3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile

### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



### Programs' likelihood of meeting testing admissions requirements at the point of entry



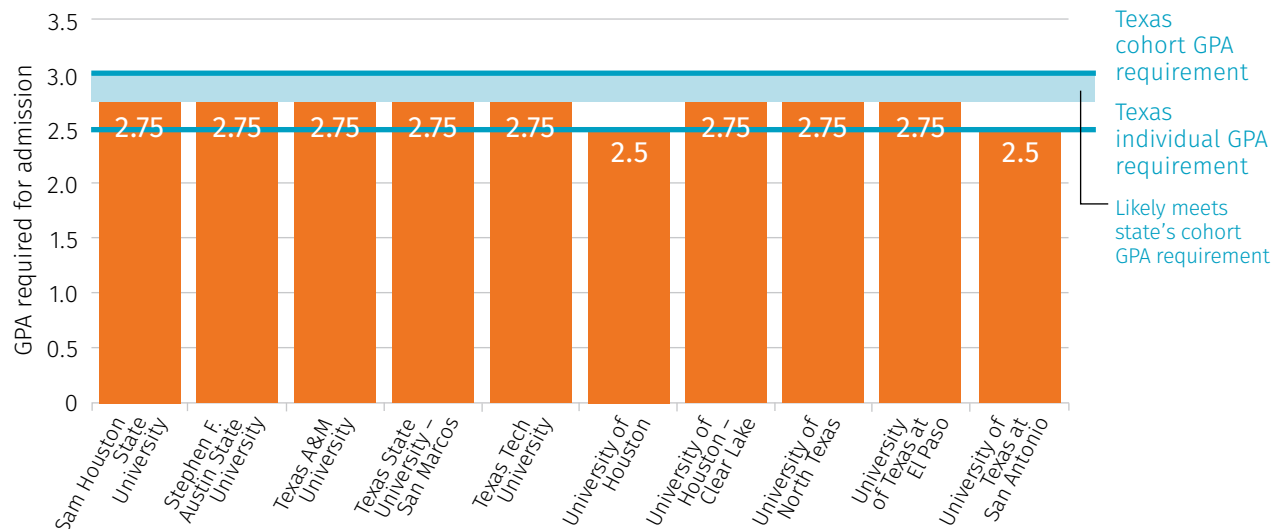
\* For the ACT, the national 50th percentile for students entering college in 2015 was a score of 20.

## Texas

### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law	
GPA	Testing
2.5 individual minimum; 3.0 cohort average  Candidates can be exempt from the minimum GPA requirement if they provide documentation that a candidate’s work, business, or career experience demonstrates achievement equivalent to the academic achievement represented by the GPA requirement. The work exception may not be used by a program to admit more than 10 percent of any cohort of candidates.	Applicants can meet the testing requirement through several options, including passing a test normed to the general college-going population. Applicants can also meet this requirement through other means, including obtaining an associate’s degree or a bachelor’s degree, enrollment in a certification program, or serving as a member of the armed forces.

### Programs’ likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry

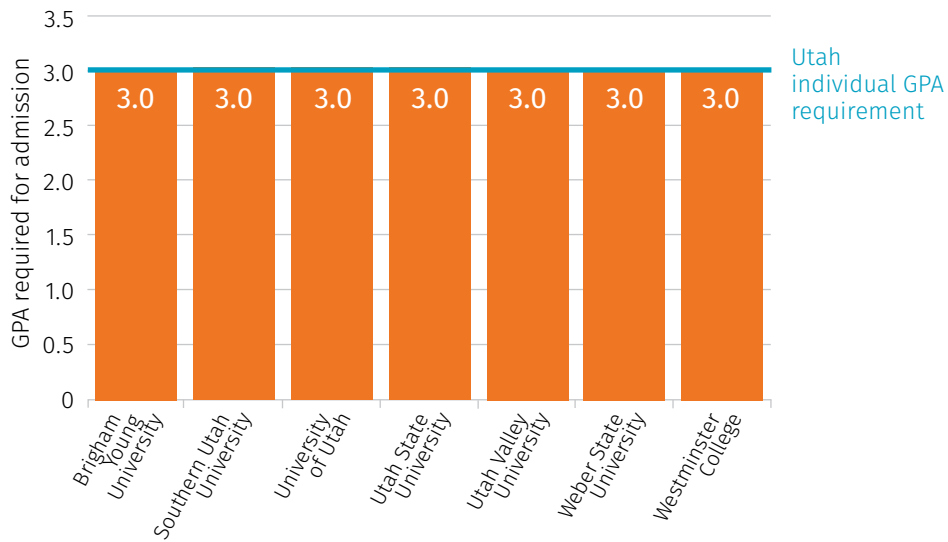


## Utah

### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law	
GPA	Testing
3.0 individual minimum	ACT composite score of 21 with a verbal/English score of no less than 20 and a mathematics/quantitative score of no less than 19; or a combined SAT score of 1000 with neither mathematics nor verbal below 450
Utah allows candidates to qualify by meeting either the GPA or test requirement.	
Utah allows a waiver whereby institutions can admit up to 10 percent of a candidate cohort that do not meet the admissions requirements.	

### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



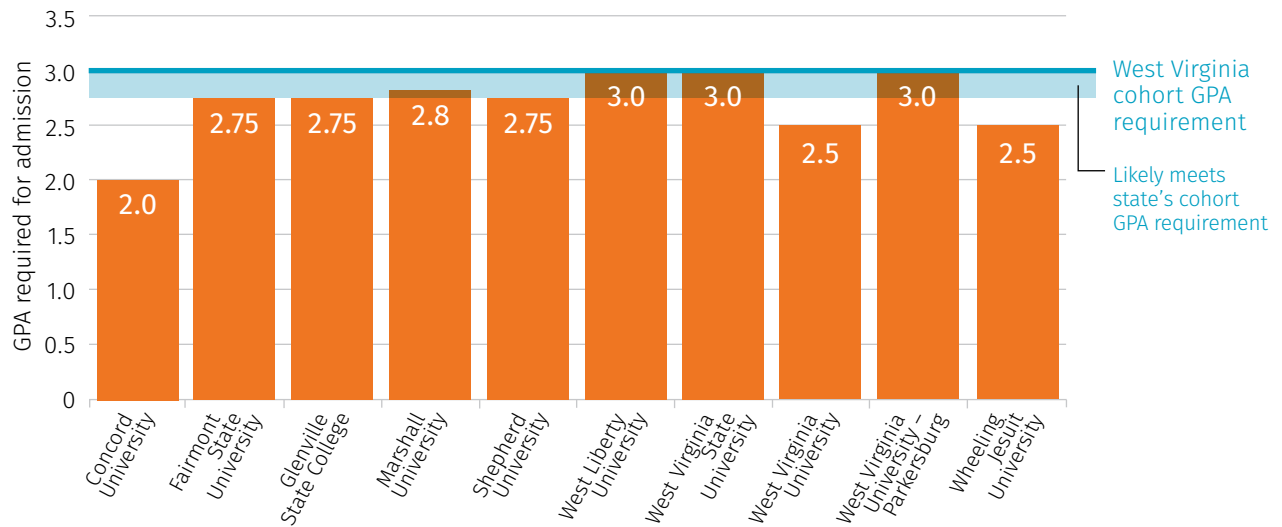
Note: While Utah sets a high individual testing requirement for admission to teacher preparation programs, individuals' test score data are not publicly available. Therefore, this analysis does not include Utah's programs' compliance with testing requirements.

## West Virginia

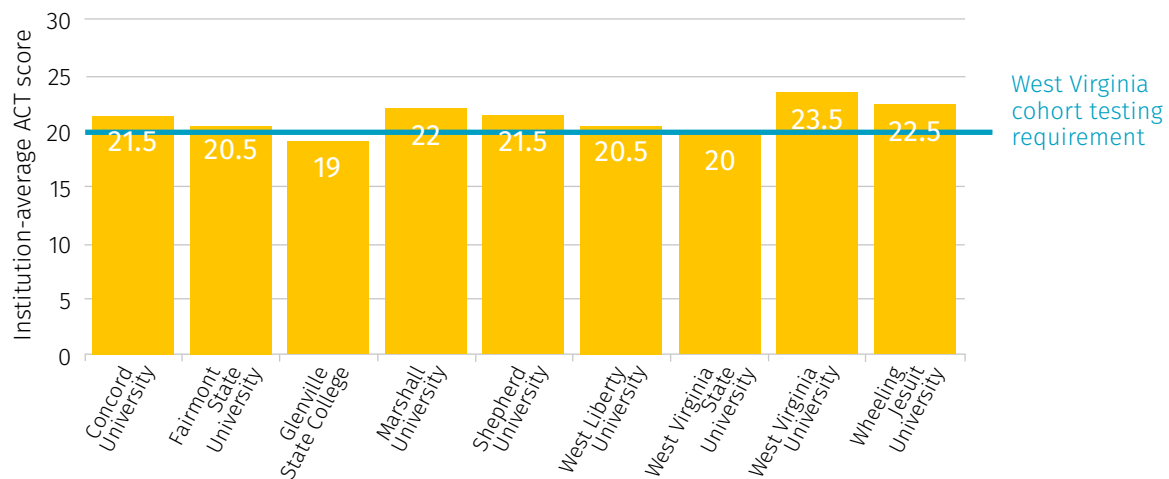
### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law	
GPA	Testing
3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile

#### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



#### Programs' likelihood of meeting testing admissions requirements at the point of entry



Note: West Virginia University – Parkersburg is not included because testing data are not available.

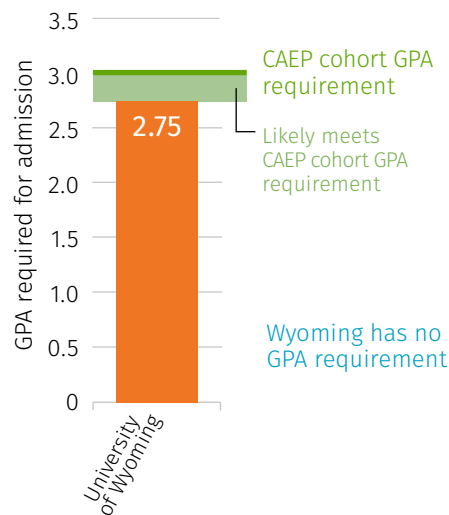


## Wyoming

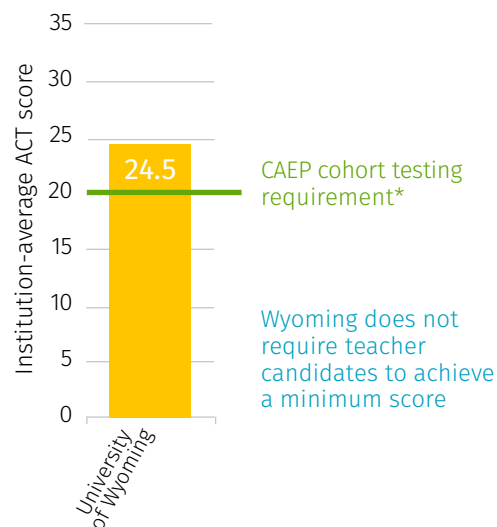
### Admissions requirements for teacher preparation programs

Requirements in state law		Requirements in CAEP standards	
GPA	Testing	GPA	Testing
None	None	3.0 cohort average	Cohort average score on a nationally-normed test in the top 50th percentile

### Programs' likelihood of meeting GPA admissions requirements at the point of entry



### Programs' likelihood of meeting testing admissions requirements at the point of entry



\* For the ACT, the national 50th percentile for students entering college in 2015 was a score of 20.



## National Council on Teacher Quality

1120 G Street, NW, Suite 800  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
Tel: 202 393-0020 Fax: 202 393-0095  
Web: [www.nctq.org](http://www.nctq.org)

The National Council on Teacher Quality advocates for reforms in a broad range of teacher policies at the federal, state and local levels in order to increase the number of effective teachers.

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