

December 10, 2014

Contact: Lisa Cohen
Phone 310.395.2544
lisa@lisacohen.org

ALABAMA SHOULD DO MORE TO ALIGN TEACHER PREPARATION WITH COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READINESS STANDARDS

Some Alabama teacher preparation policies are on the right track for ensuring that new teachers are ready to help students achieve to the high levels necessary for college and careers; others fall short.

December 10, 2014 (Washington, DC) — The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) today released its eighth annual *State Teacher Policy Yearbook*. This year's edition focuses on Alabama's efforts to align its requirements for teacher preparation and licensure with the skills needed to prepare students for college and careers.

NCTQ Vice President and Managing Director for State Policy Sandi Jacobs said, "With such a profound change occurring in K-12 student standards across the country, it would stand to reason that parallel changes would occur on the teacher side. Alabama needs to ensure that teachers are adequately supported in the transition and beyond. And there is no better place to start than where new teachers begin to learn their craft—in teacher preparation programs."

Key Yearbook Findings:

Alabama's teacher preparation requirements are not explicit about preparing teachers for college- and career-readiness standards.

- Alabama's standards for new teachers don't sufficiently articulate the instructional requirements of college- and career-readiness standards, including the use of informational texts, cross-disciplinary literacy, and intervention for struggling readers.

State content knowledge requirements for prospective teachers in Alabama still have some room for improvement.

- Alabama is one of only 21 states that requires elementary teaching candidates to pass a content test in each of the four core subject areas.
- Alabama ensures that teachers demonstrate their knowledge of the science of reading.
- However, along with the 37 other states, Alabama has significant loopholes in its licensing requirements for high school teachers.

Alabama's efforts to prepare teachers to educate special education students are stronger than most states' policies.

- Alabama is one of 17 states in the nation that does not grant K-12 special education teacher licenses. Alabama also requires elementary special education teachers to demonstrate subject matter knowledge as a condition of licensure.

However, Alabama’s teacher preparation admissions requirements are not selective.

- With a required GPA of 2.5 and a proficiency test not normed to the college-bound population (such as the ACT or SAT) for admission into teacher prep programs in the state, Alabama sets a low bar for the academic performance of the state’s prospective teachers.

Alabama could do more to hold programs accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.

- Alabama is one of 41 states that does not connect student achievement data to teacher preparation programs.

Looking at NCTQ’s traditional *Yearbook* metrics, Alabama earns an overall grade of B- for teacher preparation.

- The average grade for all states for teacher preparation in 2014 is a C, up from a D in 2011.

The [2014 Alabama State Teacher Policy Yearbook](#) is immediately available for free download. The redesigned website also provides searchable access to the entire *Yearbook* dataset, including topical pages with up-to-date data on state teacher policy, a customized search tool and user-friendly options for generating graphic results that can be exported and shared.

The *State Teacher Policy Yearbook* was funded by private foundations across the United States, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, Gleason Family Foundation, J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation, the Joyce Foundation and the Walton Family Foundation. NCTQ accepts no funding from the federal government. The National Council of Teacher Quality— comprised of reform-minded Democrats, Republicans, and Independents— is a non-partisan research and policy group committed to restructuring the teaching profession based on the belief that all children deserve effective teachers. More information about NCTQ, including a list of the Board of Directors and Advisory Board, can be found on the NCTQ website, www.nctq.org.