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

Some Connecticut 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 Connecticut'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. Connecticut 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:

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

- Connecticut'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 support for struggling readers.

State content knowledge requirements for prospective teachers in Connecticut leave room for improvement.

- Connecticut is one of only 21 states that requires elementary teaching candidates to pass a content test in each of the four core subject areas.
- Connecticut is one of just 18 states that requires prospective elementary teachers, including special education teachers and early childhood teachers licensed to teach in the early grades, to demonstrate their knowledge of the science of reading.
- However, Connecticut, along with 37 other states, has significant loopholes in its licensing requirements for high school teachers.

The preparation needs of special education teachers continues to be a largely neglected area, with the introduction of more challenging academic standards in Connecticut having little to no impact on requirements for teachers who educate special education students.

- Connecticut is one of 34 states in the nation still offers or exclusively grants K-12 special education teacher licenses. Connecticut also does not require special education teachers to demonstrate subject matter knowledge as a condition of licensure.

Connecticut's teacher preparation admissions requirements are not selective.

- With a required GPA of B- (which can be waived by any program) and a proficiency test not normed to the college-bound population (such as the ACT or SAT) as conditions for admission into teacher prep programs, Connecticut sets a low bar for the academic performance of the state's prospective teachers.

Connecticut neither collects meaningful data about the quality of teacher prep programs nor holds programs accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.

- Connecticut is one of 41 states that does not connect student achievement data to teacher preparation programs.
- Connecticut does not set explicit minimum performance standards for teacher preparation programs in the state.

Looking at NCTQ's traditional *Yearbook* metrics, Connecticut 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 Connecticut 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.