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## **NEBRASKA TEACHER PREPARATION IS NOT ALIGNED WITH COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READINESS STANDARDS**

**Nebraska's teacher preparation policies fail to ensure that new teachers are ready to help students achieve to the high levels necessary for college and careers.**

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 Nebraska'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 more focus than ever on ensuring students are ready for college and careers, it would stand to reason that Nebraska would be making key changes to requirements for teacher preparation and licensure. And there is no better place to start than where new teachers begin to learn their craft—in teacher preparation programs."

### **Key Yearbook Findings:**

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

- Nebraska's standards for new teachers do not articulate the instructional requirements of college- and career-readiness standards, such as using informational texts, cross-disciplinary literacy, and support for struggling readers.

**State content knowledge requirements for prospective teachers in Nebraska aren't ambitious enough to meet the demands of college- and career-readiness standards.**

- Nebraska does not require elementary teaching candidates to pass a content test with separate scores demonstrating knowledge in each of the four core subject areas, which makes it difficult to ensure that teachers have mastered the content they will be licensed to teach.
- Nebraska does not require teachers to demonstrate their knowledge of the science of reading.
- Under some circumstances, Nebraska issues K-8 licenses, which fail to differentiate between the preparation of elementary and middle school teachers.
- Nebraska, 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.**

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

**Nebraska’s teacher preparation admissions requirements are not selective.**

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

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

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

**Looking at NCTQ’s traditional *Yearbook* metrics, Nebraska earns an overall grade of D- 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 Nebraska 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.

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