

December 10, 2014

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RHODE ISLAND IS AHEAD OF MOST STATES IN ALIGNMENT OF TEACHER PREPARATION WITH COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READINESS STANDARDS

Rhode Island's teacher preparation policies are stronger than most states in terms of ensuring that new teachers are ready to help students achieve to the high levels necessary for college and careers; there is still some room for improvement.

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 Rhode Island'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. Rhode Island 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:

Rhode Island's teacher requirements are somewhat explicit about preparing teachers for college- and career-readiness standards.

- Rhode Island standards for new teachers could do more to 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 Rhode Island still have room for improvement.

- Rhode Island is one of only 21 states that requires elementary teaching candidates, including early childhood teacher candidates who are licensed to teach in the elementary grades, to pass a content test in each of the four core subject areas.
- However, Rhode Island does not ensure that elementary teacher candidates know the science of reading.
- Along with 37 other states, Rhode Island has significant loopholes in its licensing requirements for high school teachers.

Rhode Island's special education policies are stronger than policies in most states.

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

Rhode Island's teacher preparation admissions requirements are selective.

- With a required GPA of 3.0 and a proficiency test normed to the college-bound population for admission into teacher prep programs, Rhode Island sets a higher bar than most states for the academic performance of the state's prospective teachers.

Rhode Island collects important data on the performance of teacher prep programs in the state but does not yet hold teacher prep programs accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.

- Rhode Island is one of just 10 states in the nation that connects student achievement data to teacher preparation programs.
- However, Rhode Island has not set explicit minimum performance standards for teacher preparation programs in the state.

Looking at NCTQ's traditional *Yearbook* metrics, Rhode Island 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 Rhode Island 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.