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## **SOUTH CAROLINA SHOULD DO MORE TO ALIGN TEACHER PREPARATION WITH COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READINESS STANDARDS**

**Some South Carolina 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 South Carolina'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. South Carolina 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:**

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

- South Carolina'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 South Carolina could be improved to meet the demands of college- and career-readiness standards.**

- South Carolina is one of 21 states that requires content knowledge tests for elementary teachers that provide separate passing scores for the core subject areas.
- However, South Carolina does not ensure new elementary teachers' knowledge of the science of reading.
- South Carolina is one of 38 states with 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 South Carolina having little to no impact on requirements for teachers who educate special education students.**

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

**South Carolina’s teacher preparation admissions requirements may be more selective than most states.**

- Based on accreditation standards, South Carolina requires a 3.0 GPA and a test of academic proficiency normed to the college-bound population for admission to teacher preparation programs. As a result, South Carolina is setting a higher bar than most states for the academic performance of the state’s prospective teachers – if accreditors and the state hold preparation programs to these standards.

**South Carolina neither collects important data on the performance of teacher prep programs in the state nor holds teacher prep programs accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.**

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

**Looking at NCTQ’s traditional *Yearbook* metrics, South Carolina earns an overall grade of C+ 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 South Carolina 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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