

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**April 12th, 2018 at 12:01 AM**

**Contact**  
Eric Duncan  
National Council on Teacher Quality  
eduncan@nctq.org  
(202) 393-0020 ext. 130

## **DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA TEACHER PREP PROGRAMS RATED IN NCTQ'S 2018 TEACHER PREP REVIEW**

*Teach For America (DC Region) earns high distinction*

*RATINGS HIGHLIGHT DISCONNECT between PREPARATION TEACHERS GET and  
REAL DEMANDS OF TEACHING; LACK OF PREP MAY CONTRIBUTE TO FLAT NAEP  
RESULTS*

Washington DC – Today, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) releases its [latest ratings for traditional graduate and alternative route programs](#) preparing either elementary or secondary teachers, including 10 traditional graduate programs and two alternative route programs based in the District of Columbia.

### **Teacher Prep Review results for the District of Columbia**

**Highest ranked elementary program** (national percentile out of 194 programs):

- George Washington University (36th)

**Highest ranked secondary programs** (national percentile out of 406 programs):

- Teach For America (DC Region) (99th)
- University of the District of Columbia (39th)
- KIPP Capital Teaching Residency (38th)

Programs earn top marks for having strong admission criteria and providing candidates with both the content knowledge and instructional techniques needed to enter the classroom ready to teach. The best programs do more to instill classroom management skills and systematically provide high-quality practice opportunities.

*The full list of the District of Columbia's graduate and alternative route programs can be found [here](#).*

### **Key Findings for the District of Columbia**

- Programs' preparation of **elementary teachers** is uneven.
  - Of the two elementary programs reviewed in the District of Columbia, both **George Washington University** and **Trinity Washington University** were found to provide basic instruction in how to

teach young children to read. Nationally, only 23 percent of programs do so.

- None of the graduate programs reviewed attend to the specific math content elementary teachers need. Nationally, just 1 percent of programs provide such content, under the mistaken impression that elementary mathematics does not require specialized coursework.
- Programs either presume subject matter knowledge in science and social studies or discount its importance, as not a single program in the District of Columbia adequately screens elementary candidates for content knowledge in these subjects. Eighteen percent do so nationally.
- **High school teacher preparation** is particularly haphazard; the District of Columbia falls at or below the national averages.
  - None of the four programs reviewed ensure all science and social studies teachers possess adequate content knowledge. Nationally, 36 percent of programs address the need for science and social studies teachers to know multiple subjects through adequate admissions screening or by requiring candidates to complete additional subject area coursework.
  - While all high school teachers should take a course in the best ways to teach their specific subject, 29 percent of programs in the District of Columbia fail to require such coursework, in line with the national rate.
- With all the emphasis on providing teacher candidates with more and better practice, none of the District of Columbia programs reviewed pay sufficient attention to basic indicators of quality such as the teaching skills of the classroom mentor and providing regular observations and feedback to each candidate (the national average is 6 percent). The need to build classroom management skills is also overlooked: Of the nine programs that could be evaluated, only **KIPP Capital Teaching Residency** adequately verifies the classroom management skills of candidates. This is slightly below the national rate of 15 percent.

A full analysis of the findings can be found [here](#).

**Recommendations:** Based on these findings, programs need to take several essential steps to provide stronger training to aspiring teachers.

1. Focus relentlessly on the need for future elementary teachers to be ready to teach reading and math, the two most important aspects of their job.
2. Prescreen applicants to make sure they already know the core content they will teach—or be prepared to prescribe the necessary remediation.
3. Programs should better use student teaching and internships as an opportunity to give constructive, targeted feedback on specific classroom management strategies that are found to be universally effective.

“By better aligning teacher preparation with the real demands of teaching, the District of Columbia’s teacher prep programs could play a major role in boosting the quality of new teachers in the state and improving learning in schools. What a privilege and opportunity this represents,” commented Kate Walsh, president of the National Council on Teacher Quality. “As the new NAEP results suggest, the status quo in training teachers is simply insufficient for our students’ needs.”

To schedule an interview with Rob Rickenbrode, Senior Managing Director of Teacher Prep Strategies, please

contact Eric Duncan at [eduncan@nctq.org](mailto:eduncan@nctq.org) or (202) 393-0020 ext. 130.

###

***About the National Council on Teacher Quality:***

*The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) is a nonpartisan research and policy group committed to modernizing the teaching profession and based on the belief that all children deserve effective teachers. NCTQ is the nation's expert on the quality of teacher preparation programs and evaluates national teacher education against evidence-based criteria. More information about NCTQ can be found on our website, [www.nctq.org](http://www.nctq.org)*