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NCTQ RELEASES NEWEST TEACHER PREP RATINGS

IDENTIFYING TOP PROGRAMS PREPARING HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS

WHEELING JESUIT UNIVERSITY RANKS AS BEST IN WEST VIRGINIA, WHILE FAIRMONT STATE, GLENVILLE STATE, AND WEST VIRGINIA STATE RANK AMONG THE WEAKEST IN THE NATION

Washington DC – Today, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) releases its latest ratings for 717 undergraduate programs that prepare high school teachers, including seven in West Virginia.

None of the 16 programs on NCTQ’s list of the “Nation’s Top Tier Secondary Teacher Prep Programs” is in West Virginia. The closest “Top Tier” programs are in neighboring states: Ohio Wesleyan University (Delaware, OH) and Messiah College (Grantham, PA).

Top Tier programs have solid admission standards, provide sufficient preparation in each teacher candidate’s intended subject area, and show candidates how best to teach that subject. Many also do well in evaluating candidates on how to manage a classroom and providing and ensuring the high quality of practice opportunities.

Teacher Prep Programs in West Virginia

West Virginia’s highest ranked program is Wheeling Jesuit University, which only ranks in the 59th percentile nationally.

The rest of West Virginia’s programs fall below the 50th percentile:

Undergraduate Secondary Program in West Virginia	Percentile
Wheeling Jesuit University	59th
West Liberty University	49th
Shepherd University	42nd
Concord University	34th
West Virginia State University	16th
Glenville State College	16th
Fairmont State University	14th

Key National Findings: As for overall performance of the 700+ programs, a common problem that surfaced in the analysis is the weak content preparation provided to science and social studies teacher candidates. That weakness contrasts sharply with almost uniformly strong preparation in English and mathematics content in the same institutions. A sizeable portion of programs (43 percent across the country) struggle to prepare teachers who will be qualified to teach the subjects under the umbrella of either science or social studies. For example, even though history is the subject most teachers with general social studies certification will be asked to teach, one out of five programs requires minimal to no history courses of their candidates.

- Through a combination of licensing test and coursework requirements, all programs in West Virginia earn an A for content preparation in the sciences.
- All programs in West Virginia earn an A or B for content preparation in the social studies.

To see how programs in each state perform on their coverage of science go [here](#), and for social studies go [here](#).

Only 42 percent of programs succeed at teaching future teachers both the content and teaching methods for their subject. For a list of these programs in each state, go [here](#).

Other Key Findings:

- A quarter of all programs do not require a course in the best ways to teach a specific subject. However, 86 percent of programs in West Virginia require teacher candidates to take a methods course in their subject area.
- There are early signs of some programs becoming more selective in their admissions, but it is still the case that 44 percent of programs set the bar too low for who gets into their programs. In West Virginia, 86 percent of programs are not sufficiently selective. For a list of programs' selectivity rank in each state go [here](#).
- Among sufficiently selective programs, half also meet diversity goals, although none do so in West Virginia. For a list of selective and diverse programs in each state, go [here](#).
- Only 6 percent of programs pay sufficient attention to the quality of student teaching by establishing an expectation that only skilled teachers should be allowed to mentor a future teacher and requiring student teachers to be regularly observed by program staff. Unfortunately, no program in West Virginia does well in this area, because none adequately monitors the quality of mentor teachers. One in four does not even provide frequent observations to student teachers. For a list of programs with strong student teaching in each state go [here](#).
- Fewer than half of all programs (44 percent) evaluate teacher candidates on their use of the most effective strategies for managing classrooms while student teaching. In West Virginia one third of programs ensure that future teachers have this experience, lower than the national average. For a list of programs that perform well on classroom management in each state, go [here](#).

Recommendations: Based on this research, NCTQ recommends that states make sure that high school teachers have a deep understanding of the content they will teach students, a goal that can be met by better licensing tests. Most states, including West Virginia, are overdue for revamping their licensing tests, as most allow a high score in one subject to compensate for a low score in another. For instance, West Virginia could strengthen teacher content knowledge by requiring that the licensing test for Social

Studies certification adequately assesses teachers in all of the subjects they will be certified to teach. Currently, only Arizona, Minnesota, and Missouri have strong tests in all core subject areas.

NCTQ also calls on programs to raise subject content requirements to require a solid education in *all* the subjects the future teacher will be licensed to teach, even in the broad categories of science and social studies. For more on what programs do to successfully ensure the preparation of all candidates in science, go [here](#), and for social studies, go [here](#).

This edition of the *Teacher Prep Review* analyzes undergraduate programs preparing secondary school teachers. The next set of ratings from NCTQ will appear in Fall 2017 and will cover graduate and alternative (or nontraditional) programs preparing elementary teachers. The ratings for graduate and nontraditional secondary programs will follow in Spring 2018, followed by undergraduate and graduate special education programs in Fall 2018.

To read the *Landscape* report, click [here](#). To schedule an interview with NCTQ President Kate Walsh, please contact Stephen Buckley at (202) 393-0020 ext. 129.

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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