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ILLINOIS TEACHER PREP PROGRAMS RATED IN NCTQ'S 2018 TEACHER PREP REVIEW

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 22 traditional graduate programs in Illinois.

Teacher Prep Review results for Illinois

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

- Northern Illinois University (57th)
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (56th)
- McKendree University (42nd)
- National Louis University (39th)
- Northwestern University (34th)

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

- Northwestern University (56th)
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (35th)
- Saint Xavier University (33rd)

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 Illinois's graduate and alternative route programs can be found [here](#).

Key Findings for Illinois

- Programs' preparation of **elementary teachers** is uneven.
 - One of the six elementary programs reviewed, **National Louis University**, provides basic instruction in how to teach young children to read. In the national sample, 23 percent do so.
 - Not a single elementary program reviewed attends to the specific math content elementary teachers need, under the mistaken impression that elementary mathematics does not require specialized coursework. Nationally, 1 percent provide such content.
 - Programs either presume subject matter knowledge in science and social studies or discount its importance, as only 25 percent of programs in Illinois adequately screen elementary candidates for content knowledge in these subjects, while even fewer (18 percent) do so nationally.
- **High school teacher preparation** is mixed. Compared to other states, Illinois is better in some ways and worse in others.
 - None of the 10 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.
 - All high school teachers should take a course in the best ways to teach their specific subject. With 90 percent of programs requiring such coursework, Illinois exceeds the national rate of 70 percent.
- With all the emphasis on providing teacher candidates with more and better practice, none of the Illinois 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: None of the programs examined (the national rate is 15 percent) adequately verify the competency of candidates.

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, Illinois’ 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 or (202) 393-0020 ext. 130.

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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