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**National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) Endorses New Report from Center for American Progress:
Findings Show Teacher Prep Programs Can Be Both More Selective and More Diverse**

Statement by Rob Rickenbrode, NCTQ's Senior Managing Director, Teacher Preparation Strategies

While building both a diverse and selective teacher workforce has been a priority for our education system for many years, educators have often looked at diversity and selectivity as competing priorities. In our review of teacher preparation programs, we have noticed well-intentioned programs often responding to a lack of diversity among teachers candidates by lowering their standards. Additionally, states and districts resist the call to raise teacher prep admissions standards for fear that such a move will reduce further the number of teachers of color.

However, a new report by the Center for American Progress shows how American education need not choose between selectivity and diversity among the teacher workforce. The report, "[America Needs More Teachers of Color and a More Selective Teaching Profession](#)," cites evidence against the claim that teacher diversity and selectivity cannot coexist.

The paper shows how the diversity of undergraduate education majors actually grew in eight of the nine states that increased the selectivity of entry into teacher preparation programs. In four states, this increase in diversity among education majors was greater than the increase for the student body overall. The report also highlights case studies showing how "rigorous recruitment and thoughtful selection processes can achieve increased diversity and selectivity simultaneously."

These findings corroborate NCTQ's own research on teacher prep programs finding that among examined programs preparing [high school](#) and [elementary teachers](#), nearly half of the most selective programs (drawing most of their aspiring teachers from the top-half of the college-going population) are also diverse (defined as being at or above the diversity of the whole institution or of teachers statewide).

In light of this evidence, teacher preparation programs should look for ways to raise their standards while simultaneously improving their recruitment of teacher candidates to create a diverse student body.

NCTQ agrees with many of the recommendations in the report, especially its call for regular review and approval of teacher prep programs with a high bar for program approval. CAP writes that this can be

done by strengthening the approval process (as a minimum), highlighting public reporting on the programs' diversity, and retaining a high level of program quality by preventing new prep programs from opening unless the approval process demonstrates a real need. It also writes that programs should: measure and research competencies associated with highly effective teachers, strategically recruit teacher candidates of color, and make their campuses more welcoming for students of color.

This paper offers useful guidance for teacher preparation programs, accrediting organizations, and the state leaders and policymakers who govern them. We urge more programs and states to listen and follow this advice. We also encourage them to become more proactive in shaping the teacher workforce through rules and requirements on selectivity, proactive recruitment for diversity, and state licensing of teachers (including the subjects and levels for teachers' certification, requirements for continuing education, and rules for teachers originally certified in a different state).

When programs fret about enrollment dropping by raising their standards about admission, they are overlooking this one fact: a lot of college students refuse to consider a teaching major precisely because programs are not selective enough. The teaching profession loses great prospects - black, Hispanic and white - year in and year out for one simple truth: many teacher preparation programs have made teaching a low status proposition.

For our part, NCTQ will continue to highlight the programs that achieve both high levels of diversity and selectivity.

To schedule an interview with Mr. Rickenbrode, please contact Eric Duncan at (202) 393-0020 ext. 130.

About the National Council on Teacher Quality:

The National Council on Teacher Quality is a nonpartisan research and policy group, committed to modernizing the teaching profession and based on the belief that all children deserve effective teachers. We recognize that it is not teachers who bear responsibility for their profession's many challenges, but the institutions with the greatest authority and influence over teachers. More information about NCTQ can be found on our website, www.nctq.org.