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

Lipscomb University and Memphis Teacher Residency earn 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 15 traditional graduate programs and three alternative route programs based in Tennessee.

Teacher Prep Review results for Tennessee

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

- Lipscomb University (98th)
- King University (71st)

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

- Memphis Teacher Residency (98th)
- Lipscomb University: Teaching License Program (Transitional License Option) (94th)
- Project Inspire (89th)
- University of Tennessee - Martin (84th)
- East Tennessee State University (83rd)
- University of Memphis (82nd)

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

Key Findings for Tennessee

- Programs' preparation of **elementary teachers** is uneven.
 - One of the four elementary programs reviewed, **Christian Brothers University**, provides basic instruction in how to teach young children to read. In the national sample, 23 percent do so.
 - None of the programs reviewed attend to the specific math content elementary teachers need, under the mistaken impression that elementary mathematics does not require specialized coursework. Nationally, just 1 percent of programs provide such content.
 - Programs either presume or discount the importance of subject matter knowledge in science and social studies, as not a single Tennessee program adequately screens elementary candidates for content knowledge in these subjects; 18 percent do so nationally.
- **High school teacher preparation** is considerably better, with Tennessee strong compared to other states.
 - Tennessee effectively ensures adequate content knowledge for all science and social studies teachers with state policy that limits certifications to individual subjects.
 - While all high school teachers should take a course in the best ways to teach a specific subject, 40 percent of programs in Tennessee fail to require such coursework, worse than the national rate of 29 percent.
- With all the emphasis on providing teacher candidates with more and better practice, of the 16 Tennessee programs evaluated only **Lipscomb University** and **Memphis Teacher Residency** 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 sometimes overlooked, with only 56 percent (exceeding the national rate of 15 percent) of programs adequately verifying the classroom management skills 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, Tennessee’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 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