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

Richmond Teacher Residency, Virginia Commonwealth University 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 27 traditional graduate programs and one alternative route program based in Virginia.

Teacher Prep Review results for Virginia

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

- Virginia Commonwealth University (94th)
- University of Virginia (87th)
- George Mason University (77th)
- Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (77th)
- Christopher Newport University (75th)

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

- Richmond Teacher Residency (99th)
- Virginia Commonwealth University (97th)
- College of William and Mary (92nd)
- Old Dominion University (87th)
- University of Virginia (87th)

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

Key Findings for Virginia

- Programs' preparation of **elementary teachers** is uneven.
 - Only 17 percent of elementary programs provide basic instruction in how to teach young children to read. In the national sample, 23 percent do so.
 - Not a single graduate program attends 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.
 - While programs typically discount the importance of subject matter knowledge in science and social studies, 55 percent of Virginia programs adequately screen elementary candidates for content knowledge in these subjects, compared to just 18 percent nationally.
- **High school teacher preparation** is considerably better; Virginia is strong compared to other states.
 - Out of the 15 programs reviewed, 67 percent ensure social studies teachers possess adequate content knowledge. Nationally, just 39 percent of programs address the need for social studies teachers to know multiple subjects through adequate admissions screening or by requiring candidates to complete additional subject area coursework.
 - Virginia effectively ensures adequate content knowledge for all science teachers with state policy that limits science certifications to individual subjects.
 - All high school teachers should take a course in the best ways to teach a specific subject. With 81 percent of programs requiring such coursework, Virginia exceeds the national rate of 70 percent.
- With all the emphasis on providing teacher candidates with more and better practice, of the 28 programs evaluated in Virginia only **Richmond Teacher Residency** pays 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 in this area is 6 percent. The need to build classroom management skills is also overlooked, with only 32 percent (exceeding the national rate of 15 percent) of programs adequately verifying 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, Virginia’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