

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE

REPRESENTATIVES

Rick Miera, Vice Chair
Nora Espinoza
Jimmie C. Hall
Dennis J. Roch
Sheryl M. Williams Stapleton
Mimi Stewart

State Capitol North, 325 Don Gaspar, Suite 200
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501
Phone: (505) 986-4591 Fax: (505) 986-4338
<http://www.nmlegis.gov/lcs/lesc/lescdefault.aspx>



SENATORS

John M. Sapien, Chair
Craig W. Brandt
Gay G. Kernan
Howie C. Morales

ADVISORY

Alonzo Baldonado
Nathan "Nate" Cote
George Dodge, Jr.
David M. Gallegos
Stephanie Garcia Richard
Timothy D. Lewis
Tomás E. Salazar
James E. Smith
Christine Trujillo
Bob Wooley

ADVISORY

Jacob R. Candelaria
Lee S. Cotter
Daniel A. Ivey-Soto
Linda M. Lopez
John Pinto
William P. Soules
Pat Woods

Frances Ramirez-Maestas, Director

July 10, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: Legislative Education Study Committee

FR: LaNysha Adams

**RE: STAFF REPORT: NATIONAL COUNCIL ON TEACHER QUALITY (NCTQ),
*TEACHER PREP REVIEW 2013 REPORT***

INTRODUCTION

On June 18, 2013, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) and *U.S. News & World Report* released *Teacher Prep Review: A Review of the Nation's Teacher Preparation Programs, 2013*. NCTQ's *Teacher Prep Review* provides data on 2,420 elementary, secondary, and a limited number of special education programs in 1,130 institutions of higher education in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The *Review's* findings reflect more than two years of data collection, with findings based on an analysis of syllabi, student handbooks, student-teacher observation instruments, student-teaching manuals, course textbooks, and other documents.

This staff report summarizes:

- the *Teacher Prep Review* methodology;
- the program rating results of the eight New Mexico institutions in the *Teacher Prep Review*; and
- background.

TEACHER PREP REVIEW METHODOLOGY

In the introduction of *Teacher Prep Review*, NCTQ states that the information collected for the *Review* was part of their efforts:

- to create “the largest database on teacher preparation ever assembled”;
- to serve as “a consumer guide for aspiring teachers in selecting a superior preparation program and for principals and superintendents in their recruitment efforts”; and
- to include “recommendations for current teacher candidates in these programs, school districts, institutions, and policy makers to hasten the market forces that will overhaul the system.”

According to NCTQ, in order to collect data for the *Review*, NCTQ had to resort to open-records requests for the overwhelming majority of the institutions of higher education that were evaluated (see Attachment 1). According to several press releases and letters published by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE)¹ and other organizations, AACTE discouraged its members from cooperating in the *Review* during NCTQ’s data-collection process (see “Background,” below).

In addition to open-records requests to institutions of higher education, NCTQ obtained data from:

- open-records requests to school districts;
- online searches; and
- campus outreach directly to staff, faculty, and students.

After the open-records requests, 25 institutions still withheld syllabi, claiming copyright protection that their state’s open records law allowed them the exception of “course materials.” Northern New Mexico College was one of these institutions (see page 82 of Attachment 1). NCTQ cited many institutions’ lack of cooperation in the *Review* as part of the complexity in the methodology and also as a key contributor to many of the *Review*’s limitations. In Attachment 1, NCTQ emphasizes that “in no instance was a program given a score on the basis of whether it did or did not provide data. Level of cooperation was not a factor in our evaluations.”

Program Ratings Based on Key Standards

NCTQ was able to determine overall program ratings based on a set of “key” elementary and secondary standards for 1,200 programs at 608 institutions, which can be found on the *U.S. News & World Report* website (see Attachment 2). The *U.S. News & World Report* only posted ratings based on the key standards; however, NCTQ published data on additional standards and 522 additional institutions. According to NCTQ, the *Teacher Prep Review* provides data on the 1,130 institutions that prepare 99 percent of traditionally trained new teachers in the United States.

¹ The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) is a national alliance of educator preparation programs in 800 institutions of higher education dedicated to providing high quality professional development of teachers and school leaders in order to enhance PK-12 student learning.

The *Teacher Prep Review* standards address four areas of teacher preparation:

- selection criteria, which describes the talent that teachers need;
- subject area/content preparation, which describes what teachers should know;
- professional skills, which describes what teachers should be able to do; and
- outcomes, which describes how the institution collects, monitors, and accounts for data-based evidence of effectiveness.

It is important to note that NCTQ was unable to apply all relevant standards to all programs evaluated in the *Review* (see Attachment 3 for details on NCTQ's standards and indicators). When NCTQ was unable to rate a program on a standard, it was removed from the sample.

The key standards for Elementary Teacher Prep programs evaluated include:

- Selection Criteria;
- Early Reading;
- Common Core Elementary Mathematics;
- Common Core Elementary Content; and
- Student Teaching.

The key standards for Secondary Teacher Prep programs evaluated include:

- Selection Criteria;
- Common Core Middle School Content;
- Common Core High School Content; and
- Student Teaching.

The key standards for Special Education Teacher Prep programs evaluated include:

- Selection Criteria;
- Early Reading;
- Common Core Elementary Mathematics;
- Common Core Special Education Content;
- Student Teaching; and
- Instructional Design for Special Education.

Program Ratings Weight Scores on Individual Key Standards

NCTQ's *Teacher Prep Review* program ratings weight scores on individual key standards. For Elementary Teacher Prep program ratings:

- the weight of scores on the Selection Criteria Standard is heaviest;
- the weight of scores on the Student Teaching Standard next heaviest; and
- the scores on the Early Reading, Common Core Elementary Mathematics and Common Core Elementary Content Standards weighted least but equally.

For Secondary Teacher Prep program ratings:

- the weight of scores on the relevant content standard(s) is heaviest;
- the weight of scores on the Selection Criteria Standard next heaviest; and
- scores on the Student Teaching Standard weighted least.

For Special Education Teacher Prep program ratings:

- the weight of scores on the Selection Criteria Standard is heaviest;
- the weight of scores on the Student Teaching Standard next heaviest;
- the weight of scores on the Instructional Design for Special Education next heaviest; and
- the scores on Early Reading, Common Core Elementary Math and Common Core Special Education Content weighted least heavily (and all equally).

Four-Star Rating System

Teacher preparation programs chosen by NCTQ were rated separately based on how each individual program performed on NCTQ’s key standards. Once NCTQ weighted the program scores on individual key standards, teacher preparation programs at each institution that NCTQ evaluated were given a star rating of zero to four, with four being the highest possible rating. In the *Review*, NCTQ explained that the universal “warning” symbol was “used to alert consumers and school districts” (see Figure 1, below). Programs that earned three or more stars made the NCTQ “Honor Roll.”

NEW MEXICO’S PROGRAM RATING RESULTS

Figure 1: NCTQ’s Program Ratings for New Mexico’s Institutions of Higher Education

INSTITUTION	State	Program*	No. of stars
Eastern New Mexico University	NM	ug/el	⚠
Eastern New Mexico University	NM	ug/sec	☆☆☆☆
New Mexico Highlands University	NM	ug/el	⚠
New Mexico Highlands University	NM	ug/sec	⚠
New Mexico State University	NM	ug/el	☆☆☆☆
New Mexico State University	NM	ug/sec	⚠
New Mexico State University	NM	g/el	⚠
New Mexico State University	NM	g/sec	⚠
University of New Mexico	NM	ug/el	☆☆☆☆
University of New Mexico	NM	ug/sec	⚠
University of New Mexico	NM	g/sped	☆☆☆☆
University of the Southwest	NM	ug/el	⚠
University of the Southwest	NM	ug/sec	☆☆☆☆
Western New Mexico University	NM	g/el	⚠

Program Guide: ug = undergraduate program; g = graduate program; el = elementary; sec = secondary; sped = special education

Even though NCTQ evaluated eight elementary programs and eight secondary programs in eight of New Mexico's institutions of higher education, only six of them had "sufficient data for an overall program rating" as shown above in Figure 1. The eight institutions evaluated by NCTQ were:

- Eastern New Mexico University;
- New Mexico Highlands University;
- New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology;
- New Mexico State University;
- Northern New Mexico College;
- University of New Mexico;
- University of the Southwest; and
- Western New Mexico University.

Attachment 4 provides a summary of New Mexico's elementary and secondary teacher preparation program rating results. Of the notable findings, NCTQ found that:

- no New Mexico programs are on the Honor Roll, which means that none of the programs reviewed in the state earned at least three out of four possible star ratings;
- not one of the elementary and secondary programs in New Mexico restrict admissions to the top half of the college-going populations;
- 14 percent of the evaluated elementary programs in New Mexico are preparing teacher candidates in effective, scientifically based reading instruction. This percentage is smaller than the national average (29 percent) of programs providing such training;
- 14 percent of the evaluated elementary programs in New Mexico provide elementary math training;
- all New Mexico elementary and secondary programs evaluated fail to ensure a high quality student teaching experience;
- 13 percent of New Mexico's elementary programs earn three or four stars for providing teacher candidates adequate content preparation, compared to 11 percent nationwide;
- none of New Mexico's secondary programs earn four stars for content preparation, compared to 35 percent nationwide; and
- none of New Mexico's evaluated programs earn four stars for collecting data on their graduates.

Additionally, NCTQ found that:

- five out of the seven of the eight elementary programs evaluated in New Mexico, earn a score of zero on English Language Learners Standard; and
- there was no evidence that elementary education candidates receive even minimal instruction or practice in strategies focused specifically on the teaching of reading to English language learners.

BACKGROUND

During the 2012 interim, the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) met an additional day in November, to discuss issues related to the teaching of reading in New Mexico compared to five other states – Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, and Texas. Testimony provided to the committee by policy analysts from the Education Commission of the States (ECS) noted that Kentucky was the only state out of the five examined that requires science-based reading as part of teacher preparation. The ECS analysts informed the committee that an extensive report examining teacher preparation programs would be released sometime in 2013.

NCTQ cites the *Flexner Report* of 1910² as an inspiration for the *Teacher Prep Review* because of how the report’s critical evaluation of medical schools led to transformations in the way doctors are trained. As a result of the *Flexner Report*, nearly half of the 155 medical schools in North America at the time either merged or were closed.

NCTQ’s 2012 State Teacher Policy Yearbook: New Mexico’s Context

According to the NCTQ 2012 *State Teacher Policy Yearbook*, New Mexico received a “D+” grade in aspects of the state’s teacher preparation policies (see Attachment 5, where a “green light” means that the states are on track, a “yellow light” means in need of improvement, and a “red light” means that the teacher preparation policies are “far off the mark when it comes to fostering teacher effectiveness out of the gate”). However, the 2012 *State Teacher Policy Yearbook* also named New Mexico as one of 10 states with a strong practice in measuring new teachers’ knowledge of the science of reading; even though the assessment was under development at the time NCTQ conducted the review.

Responses to NCTQ’s 2013 Teacher Prep Review

During NCTQ’s two and a half year data collection process for the *Teacher Prep Review*, AACTE published several press releases and letters warning the public about NCTQ’s “flawed research and bias.” The same day NCTQ’s *Review* was released, AACTE published a press release warning that the *Review* is “misleading, unreliable and an effort to promote an ideological agenda rather than a genuine effort to inform the public and improve teacher preparation” (see Attachment 6).

Despite the fact that the *Teacher Prep Review* has been endorsed by 24 state school chiefs, over 100 district superintendents, the Council of the Great City Schools, and 77 advocacy organizations across 42 states and Washington D.C., a growing number of researchers and other educational stakeholders are critical of the methodology NCTQ used to collect and analyze evidence about the quality of the 1,130 teacher education programs that were evaluated.

Federal Law Requirements for Measuring Teacher Education Programs

Title II of the federal *Higher Education Act* (HEA), as amended in 2008, requires each state receiving funding under HEA to report annually on the quality of teacher preparation in the state, including:

² The Flexner Report was a study of medical education in the United States and Canada, funded by the Carnegie Foundation, written by Abraham Flexner, and published in 1910.

- standards for teachers and their alignment with standards for students;
- requirements for an initial teaching certificate or license through either an alternate or regular route;
- pass rates on each assessment used by states in certifying or licensing teachers;
- state standards for evaluating the performance of teacher preparation programs;
- teachers in the classroom on waivers, that is, teaching without an initial regular certificate or license from any state; and
- state efforts in the past year to improve the quality of teaching.

HEA also requires states to identify teacher education programs in their states that are “low performing” or “at risk of becoming low performing.” According to New Mexico’s *2012 Title II State Report* on the US Department of Education (USDE) website, the Public Education Department (PED) has a partnership agreement with the National Council for the Accreditation of Education Preparation (NCATE)³ and uses their standards, policies, and procedures as the measure of effective educator preparation programs throughout New Mexico. In New Mexico’s *2012 Title II State Report*, no teacher preparation programs in New Mexico were classified as low performing or at risk.

Current State Law

Provisions in the *Public School Code* require PED to:

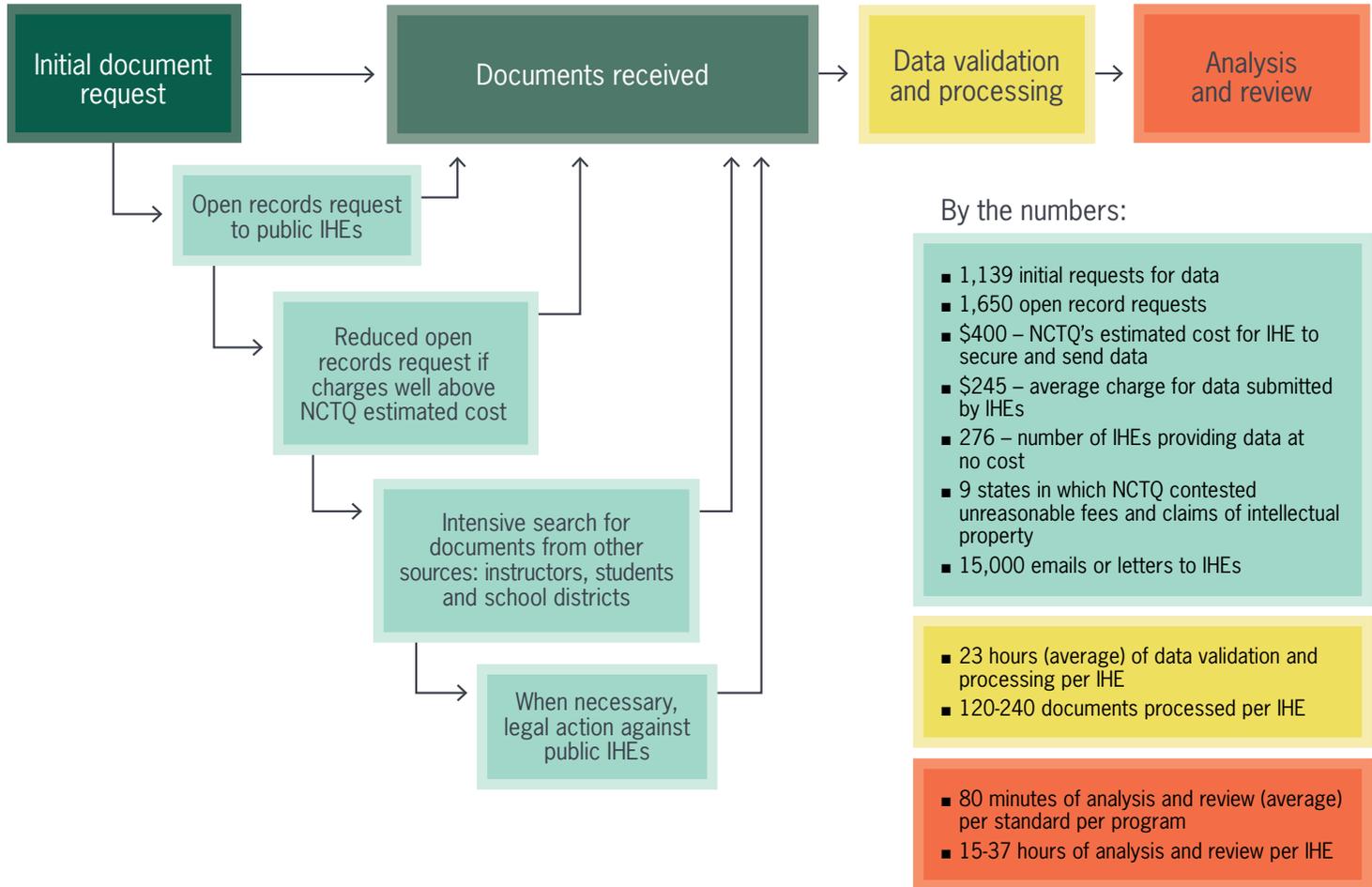
- approve education curricula and programs offered in all two-year public postsecondary educational institutions, except those that lead to alternative licenses for degreed persons or licensure for educational assistants; and
- withhold program approval from a college of education that beginning teachers are proficient in teaching reading that:
 - is based upon scientifically based reading research;
 - aligns with PED-approved reading standards;
 - includes strategies and assessment measures to ensure that beginning teachers are proficient in teaching reading; and
 - was designed after seeking input from experts in the education field.

³ On July 1, 2013, NCATE and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) were consolidated into the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). The CAEP Commission on Standards and Performance Reporting is currently in the process of finalizing new accreditation standards for all teacher preparation programs that are based on evidence directly linked to student achievement, continuous improvement, innovation, and clinical practice.

Data collection, validation and analysis

There's a lot to say about the process of data collection, validation and analysis.

Fig. 39. Data collection, processing and analysis



Most data were not obtained in response to our initial document request to public and private IHEs, leading to a series of other collection efforts primarily focused on open records requests to public IHEs.

Data collection

The field of teacher preparation has much to gain from an independent evaluation intent on spotlighting strong performers. And since most of the institutions in our sample cooperate with our partner, *U.S. News & World Report*, in developing its annual rankings of colleges and universities, we anticipated that they would work with us as well.

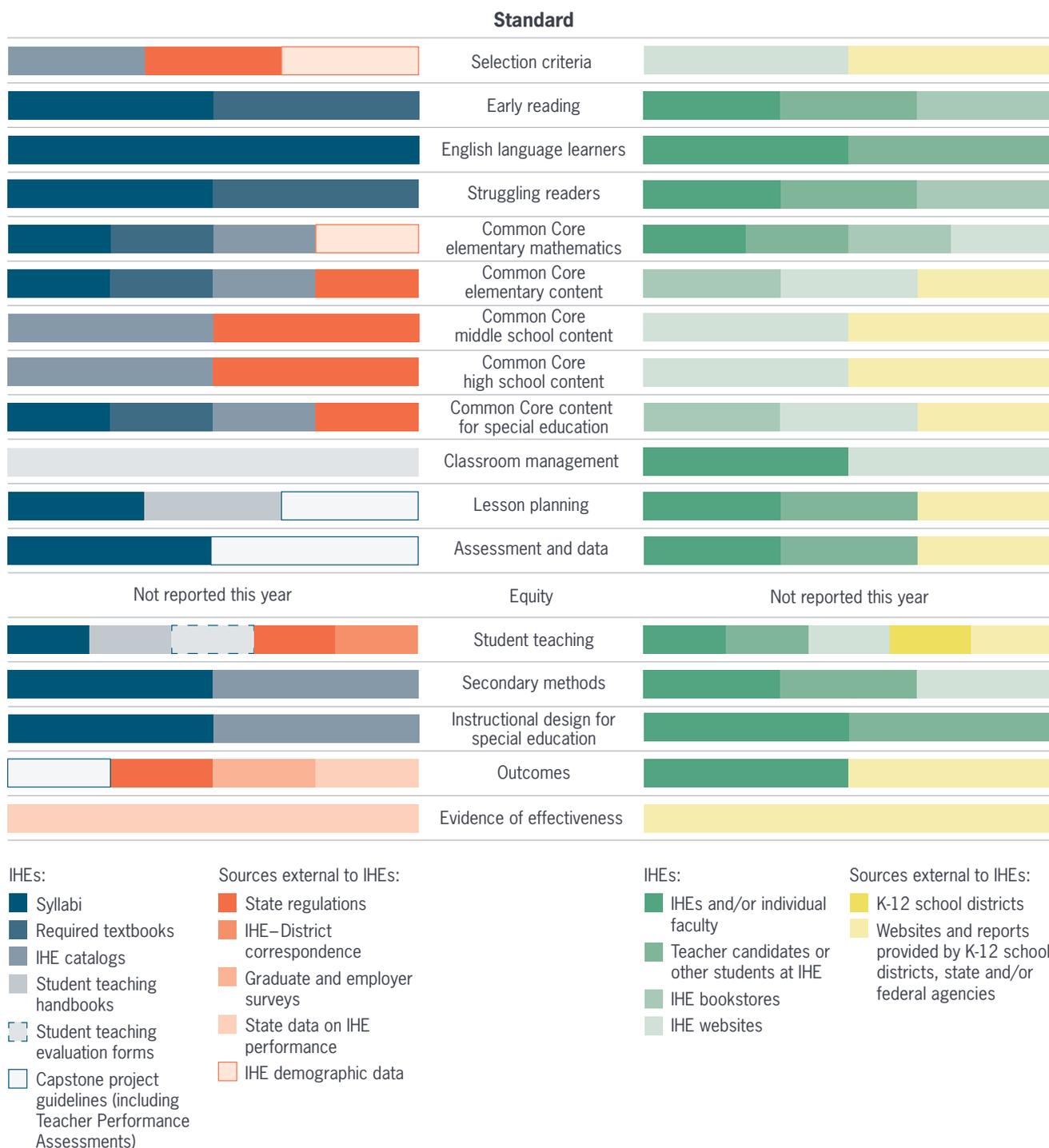
As it turned out, we faced a nationwide boycott of our effort. Ultimately, only 114 institutions chose to freely cooperate with the *Teacher Prep Review* (meaning that they provided us with the data we needed upon request without us having to resort to open-records requests). *U.S. News & World Report* received 39 letters representing approximately 700 institutions taking issue with our methods and goals. Other institutions either sent terse declines or did not respond at all to our repeated entreaties.



We were thus forced to look for alternative ways to collect legitimate data. As always, our chief concern was ensuring that we obtained valid data that accurately reflect the training these institutions provide teacher candidates.

NCTQ draws upon 11 sources of data from each program for our ratings:

Fig. 40. Data sources for the Review



A variety of data, obtained from multiple sources, were used for evaluation.

The 42 institutions listed below have never reduced their quoted fees for data to a reasonable level (\$400).

Institution

Alabama A & M University
Alabama State University
The University of Alabama
University of Alabama at Birmingham
University of North Alabama
University of South Alabama
University of West Alabama
University of Northern Colorado
Florida Atlantic University
University of North Florida
Kennesaw State University
University of Northern Iowa
University of Kansas
Washburn University
University of Massachusetts Amherst
University of Massachusetts-Boston
University of Massachusetts-Lowell
Coppin State University
Salisbury University
Eastern Michigan University
Northern Michigan University
Wayne State University
UNC at Asheville
UNC at Greensboro
New Jersey City University
William Paterson University of New Jersey
Portland State University
University of South Carolina-Beaufort
University of South Carolina-Columbia
University of South Carolina-Upstate
Lamar University
Prairie View A & M University
Texas A & M University-Kingsville
Texas State University-San Marcos
Texas Woman's University
The University of Texas at Brownsville
George Mason University
Norfolk State University
Radford University
University of Mary Washington
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
University of Wyoming
Norfolk State University
Radford University
University of Mary Washington
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
University of Vermont
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
University of Wyoming

To determine what data we needed from institutions and to gather data for program evaluation, we began by analyzing each program's coursework, reviewing university catalogs and other program material posted publicly by the institution. By this means we identified general education and professional course requirements, along with course descriptions.⁴⁶

After a comprehensive review of this publicly posted material, we asked the institutions for materials such as syllabi for particular courses,⁴⁷ information on graduate and employer surveys, and material related to student teaching placements.

The features of training that are the basis for analysis in our standards should be evident from these materials because they are the most *fundamental features* of teacher preparation.

Our preferred data collection method was "The Ask": a specially designed, web-based portal where teacher preparation staff could upload materials directly into our database.

1. Open-records requests to institutions.

All 50 states and the District of Columbia have open-records laws (also known as "sunshine," "freedom of information act" or "FOIA" laws) that require public agencies to turn over documents upon request by an individual or organization. Except in **Pennsylvania** and **Illinois**, public universities are almost universally considered public agencies under these laws.⁴⁸ But even though they are publicly approved to prepare public school teachers, teacher preparation programs at private institutions are not considered public agencies. So we made open-records requests of only the 475 public institutions that initially chose not to work with us.⁴⁹

Many institutions worked cooperatively with us once we submitted our open-records request and did not charge us as much as the laws in their states allowed. However, 162 institutions demanded excessive, sometimes even exorbitant, sums for reimbursement. We estimate that it should cost no more than \$400 in labor and copying fees for an institution to provide us with the data we need for what many institutions reported to us involved about 12 to 20 hours of time. And the average charge to us by all public institutions that fulfilled our open-records request was only \$245. But in their initial responses to our request, 15 institutions quoted fees of more than \$10,000. Most were negotiated downwards. A university that initially contended that it would cost \$30,000 to fulfill our request ultimately provided the documents at no charge.⁵⁰



We had no choice but to submit reduced requests, sometimes multiple times, to 169 institutions that charged excessive fees. These reduced requests meant that we could evaluate fewer programs (e.g., only elementary rather than elementary and secondary). While such reductions narrowed the scope of the first edition of the *Teacher Prep Review*, we made sure that they did not impinge upon our ability to fully evaluate those programs for which we received documents.⁵¹

Litigation on copyright issues

Another crucial issue that emerged—one with potentially far-reaching ramifications for the reach of open-records laws—was that of copyright. Fifty-seven institutions in 12 states claimed that course syllabi are not subject to open-records requests because they are the intellectual property of the faculty who wrote them. This conflicts with the near-universal interpretation that syllabi can be used for research and review by any entity, including NCTQ, under the “fair use” provisions of federal copyright law. The rights are owned by the faculty who created them and NCTQ’s use would not (and did not) infringe on those rights.

On October 31, 2012, a county court in **Minnesota** delivered a ruling in our suit against the **Minnesota State College and University System** indicating that “[a]ny way this case is analyzed, NCTQ is entitled to the copies of the syllabi it seeks.” The System has chosen to appeal the ruling (though the **University of Minnesota** system was persuaded to provide us with the syllabi we had asked for). The **University of Missouri** system continues to litigate on the same issues.

2. Open-records requests to school districts.

Teacher preparation programs partner with one or more school districts to arrange for student teaching as the crucial apprenticeship experience candidates need before taking the reins of a classroom. Programs often provide student teaching handbooks to districts and sign formal contracts or memoranda of understanding with districts that set forth the criteria and process by which mentor teachers are chosen. To capture this material, we sent out open-records requests to more than 1,000 districts across the country.

3. Online searches.

We judiciously searched online for information we needed for the *Teacher Prep Review*. Professors post syllabi and programs put up student teaching handbooks on institutional websites. All of this material is generally accessible. To gather it, we trained a team of six general analysts to examine websites. We also collected information on textbook listings from institutions’ online bookstores.

4. Campus outreach.

Because we needed such an extensive array of documents for our evaluation (see Fig. 40 for a full list of the data needed for each standard) and because of the resistance we faced, the methods outlined above were insufficient, particularly for private institutions. So we began reaching out to people on campuses, particularly students, to ask them to provide us with the documents we needed. Some institutions issued warnings to students against working with us. We also sent staff members to campuses to recruit students to work with us and to obtain documents directly.

These 25 institutions withheld syllabi from our open records request, claiming copyright protection, or (in the case of **Illinois** institutions) that their state’s open records law allows them the exception of “course materials.”

Institution	State
Auburn University	AL
Arkansas State University	AR
Chicago State University	IL
Eastern Illinois University	IL
Governors State University	IL
Northeastern Illinois University	IL
Northern Illinois University	IL
Southern Illinois University Carbondale	IL
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville	IL
Western Illinois University	IL
Washburn University	KS
Bemidji State University (Minnesota State-Bemidji)	MN
Metropolitan State University	MN
Minnesota State University-Mankato	MN
Minnesota State University-Moorhead	MN
Southwest Minnesota State University	MN
Winona State University	MN
Missouri University of Science and Technology	MO
University of Missouri-Columbia	MO
University of Missouri-Kansas City	MO
University of Missouri-St Louis	MO
Kean University	NJ
The College of New Jersey	NJ
William Paterson University of New Jersey	NJ
Northern New Mexico College	NM



It bears noting that college students have a vested interest in making publicly accessible many of the documents we seek. Albeit informally, students use syllabi to assess the quality of courses as they consider enrollment. In response to stories about our open-records requests, the student governments at the flagship campuses of the **University of Maryland** and the **University of Missouri** both passed resolutions in favor of having all professors make their syllabi public. The faculty senate of the **University of Maryland** signaled its support of this principle as well.

Data validation

Regardless of the source, each and every document we received had to be carefully checked to determine whether it was valid. Documents needed to be clearly dated; we did not rate evidence dated before 2009. In fact 99 percent of our data was collected in 2011 (24 percent) and 2012 (75 percent). We could only accept syllabi that were distributed to students in an actual course. The syllabi therefore had to clearly list the course number and, where appropriate, section number, as well as the professor’s name. For courses where we analyzed textbooks (reading and elementary math), the syllabi also needed to have a list of assigned textbooks.

A team of trained general analysts working under the supervision of our team leaders performed these thorough checks. At times we had to go back to institutions that had supplied us with documents in response to an open-records request to obtain more complete versions of documents we had requested.



Even if more institutions had chosen to work with us, we still would have had to mount a modest campus document collection effort for auditing purposes: Programs might provide us with “counterfeit” syllabi that they think would do better on our standards rather than the syllabi distributed to students that actually reflect the training candidates receive.⁵² Conversely, we also checked on whether syllabi provided to us only by students were genuine. The number of fake syllabi that students tried to pass off to us was negligible.

Data analysis

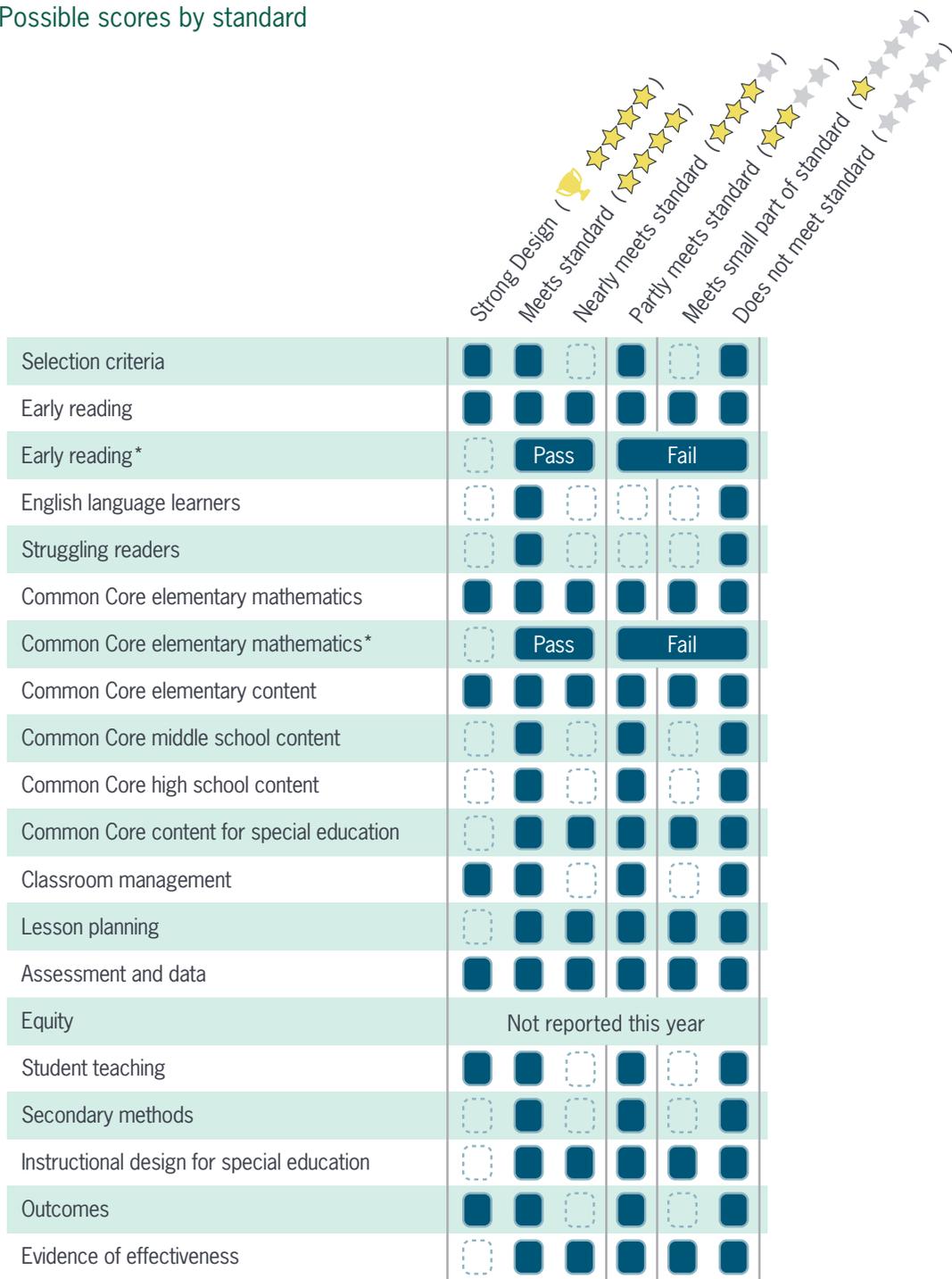
Standard policies and procedures of teacher preparation programs must be documented either because institutions need to communicate with their “consumers” (generally their students), or because programs are regulated entities that must interact regularly with various institutions (state agencies, accrediting bodies and local school districts, among others). It is the documents containing policies and procedures on which our evaluations are largely based. *Descriptions* of policies and procedures, in lieu of the actual policy statement, provided to us by institutions are never accepted as data that can satisfy any part of a standard. For example, we often found cover letters to institutions’ data submissions to be very helpful in navigating through the many files provided, but statements in the letters are not used in analysis unless they are corroborated by language in official documents.

One common feature of our evaluations is that they can be described as “low inference.” Analysts are trained to look only for evidence that teacher preparation programs have particular features related to admissions, content preparation and professional preparation. For example, in evaluating coursework on assessment, analysts determine whether teacher candidates are *required to prepare* formative assessments. Analysts do not attempt to ascertain anything about the nature of such requirements or whether they will lead teacher candidates to *effectively use* formative assessments. However, it is indisputable that a teacher candidate cannot learn how to do something effectively unless he or she is asked to do it in the first place. Our evaluations can therefore distinguish stronger programs from weaker ones.

Scoring processes

Our scoring processes place the full collection of documents relevant for evaluation at the disposal of an analyst after a very methodical and systematic process of coding and sorting. Analysts have been trained to follow a very detailed and systematic standard-specific protocol to make a “yes” or “no” decision about whether each of a standard’s indicators is satisfied.⁵³ (Scoring methodologies abstracted from these protocols can be accessed [here](#).⁵⁴) When an indicator is satisfied, the analyst has to identify the relevant data and document this source. If the indicator is not satisfied but there is information that nonetheless bears on the indicator, the analyst has to identify the data that are “next closest” to satisfying the indicator and document this source. If there are no data related to the indicator, the analyst has to make an explicit statement to that effect. All data entered in our database are automatically annotated with the date and the analyst’s name.

Fig. 41. Possible scores by standard

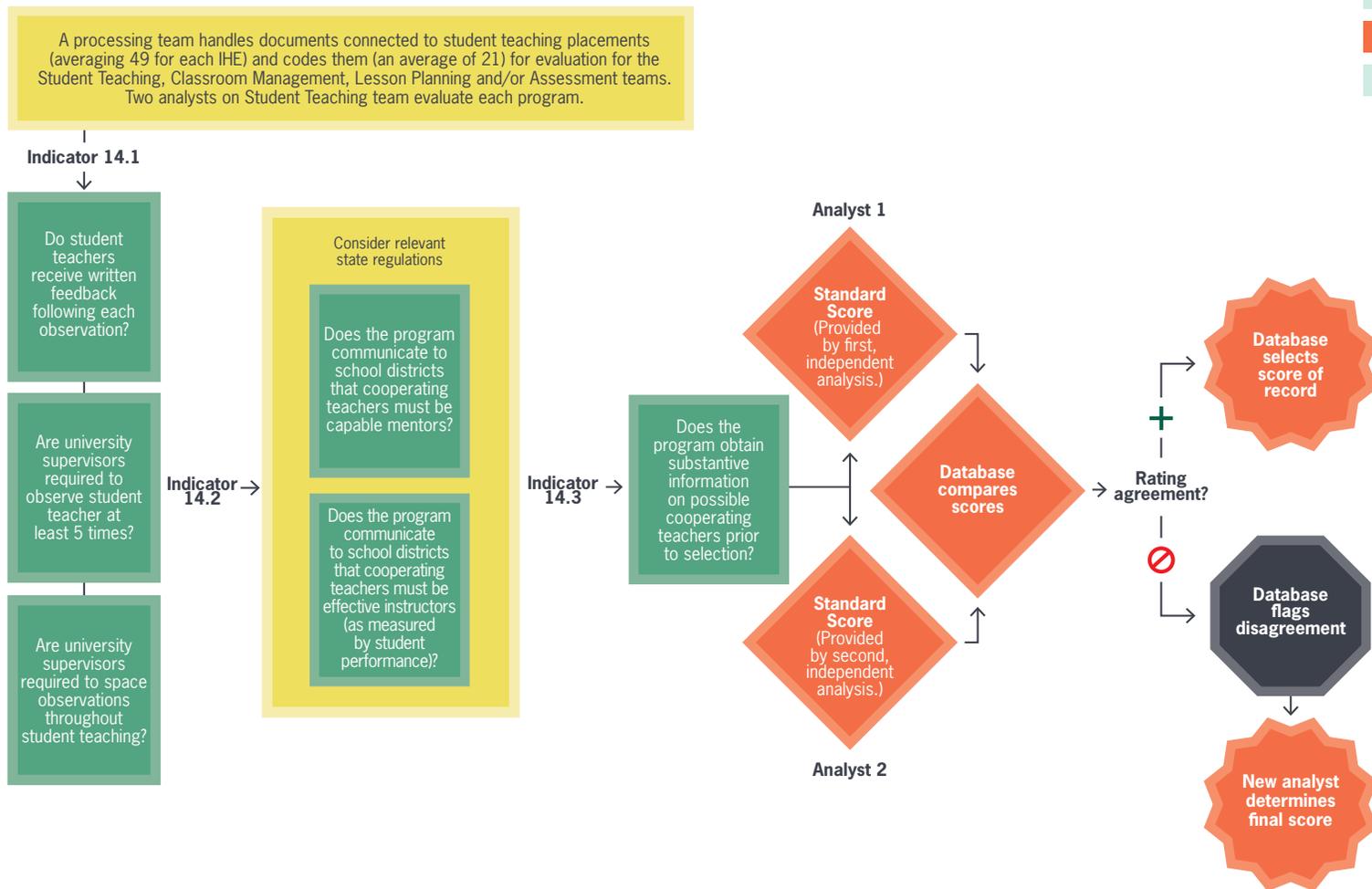


*Scoring process with less complete data available

For most standards, scores are provided using stars on a 5-part scale, with some standards also offering a special gold trophy commendation for Strong Design. For two standards, scores are classified as pass/fail if an alternative scoring process is used.

For most of our scoring processes,⁵⁵ two *general analysts* make independent evaluations of relevant evidence to ascertain if it demonstrates that the program satisfies individual indicators for a given standard.

Fig. 42. Steps in scoring a standard, using the Student Teaching Standard as an example



Each standard's scoring process involves multiple indicator-related determinations which, for the majority of standards, are made independently by two analysts.

In each case, based on the indicator evaluations, a whole number standard score between “4” and “0,” corresponding to a range of scores from “four stars” to “no stars,” is automatically generated.

In cases in which the score produced by both analysts is identical, the analysis of one is chosen randomly by the database to represent the final score. As is explained in greater depth in the description of the *RevStat* management system, any difference of one level in program scores based on evaluations by two analysts (for example, one evaluation leading to a score of “one star” and one leading to a score of “two stars”) leads to “coding up,” an automatic awarding of the higher of the two scores.⁵⁶ Any difference of two or more levels in scores triggers an “exceeds variance” signal that requires team leader investigation and resolution.⁵⁷ Instances in which there are excessive variances are monitored through the *RevStat* process; whenever variances approach 10 percent, action is taken to improve fidelity to scoring protocols or to modify the scoring process as necessary.⁵⁸

It bears noting that this **Connecticut** regulation of cooperating teacher selection is one of very few instances where the standards of the *Teacher Prep Review* conflict with state regulations.

1. State context.

States regulate teacher preparation programs extensively if not always effectively. A teacher preparation program must show that it meets its state's standards to earn approval to train and recommend candidates for licensure, and must undergo re-approval every five to seven years thereafter. All candidates must pass state licensure assessments before getting certified; pass rates on these assessments are generally incorporated into state accountability systems for teacher preparation programs. Despite these regulations, states' actual track record in holding the line on teacher preparation quality is dismal: For the last year in which data are available, programs in only 12 institutions out of more than 1,400 were deemed "low performing," a category that implies censure but not, generally speaking, action.

Nonetheless, because they impact what programs can and cannot do, all relevant state regulations are thoroughly analyzed as part of our scoring processes for every standard. We begin with the findings of our comprehensive *State Teacher Policy Yearbook*, and investigate further when necessary. In considering state regulations, we follow three general principles:

- *Hold programs harmless*

We do not penalize programs for following their states' regulations where they run counter to our standards. So, for example, in **Connecticut**, local school boards are granted sole authority to choose cooperating teachers, so we do not downgrade programs for not taking an active role in selecting them for their student teachers. It bears noting that this **Connecticut** regulation of cooperating teacher selection is one of very few instances where the standards of the *Teacher Prep Review* conflict with state regulations.

- *Give credit for building on strong regulations*

We give credit to programs explicitly affirming state regulations that improve program quality. In **Illinois**, for example, programs that affirm that they only admit applicants who achieve a passing score on that state's rigorous Test of Academic Proficiency meet the **Selection Criteria Standard**.

- *Hold programs responsible for ensuring candidates are prepared*

The ambiguity and complexity of state regulations do not relieve programs of doing what is necessary to make sure that their graduates are well equipped to help students learn. For example, 25 states offer only PK-12 certification for special education teachers. Programs in those states have an obligation to make sure that their special education candidates have adequate content knowledge, so we evaluate programs for content preparation for both the elementary and secondary grades.



2. The impact of state regulations on our analysis.

To provide a more detailed sense of how state regulations impact our analysis, we provide examples below of two standards where context is crucial, and two standards where it has no impact whatsoever.

■ *State expectations for secondary teacher subject knowledge*

Ratings for two of our standards—**Common Core Content for Middle School Teachers** and **Common Core Content for High School Teachers**—are deeply informed by the state regulatory context in which programs are embedded. The starting point of our analysis is the state’s licensing test regime: Does it test all subject matter that any given secondary teacher will need to know for all the classes he or she could be assigned to teach? The more comprehensive a state’s testing regime, the less possibility that a secondary teacher will be allowed into a classroom without knowing his or her subject. Where there are gaps in testing, we scrutinize the content coursework that programs require of their candidates.

For “unitary” subjects such as math, tests are generally an adequate guide to content preparation: Math teacher candidates, who are only tested in math, can generally only teach math classes. For the social sciences and the sciences, however, state licensing regimes are generally not robust enough. In some states, teachers earning a license in “general science” can teach high school physics without ever having to demonstrate that they know physics. In other states, a person who majored in anthropology could teach U.S. history classes without ever taking more than one or two courses in the subject. In these cases, we take a closer look at whether programs in these states are doing what they should to prepare teachers for the classes to which they could be assigned.

A general consequence of our approach for these standards is that a state’s licensing regime provides a ratings backstop for its programs: They generally can do no worse than the strength of their state’s licensing test system, and can take steps to do better.

Our approach currently assumes that states’ secondary licensing tests are sufficiently rigorous. For the next edition of the *Teacher Prep Review*, we will take a closer look at these assessments. Programs in states whose tests are inadequate will trigger more scrutiny of the coursework requirements of their programs.

(To learn more about how state context impacts these standards, see the [scoring methodologies](#) for the middle school and high school content standards.)

■ *Early Reading and Common Core Elementary Math*

State context plays virtually no role in our analysis for these two standards. States do generally articulate expectations for what elementary teachers need to know in these subjects, and a couple of states have good tests for them. Nonetheless, we decided to carefully examine the preparation that programs provide candidates without regard to the regulatory framework in which programs were embedded.

The logic behind taking an approach so different from the one taken with regard to secondary content is simple: Preparation in these subjects is a *core* responsibility of teacher preparation programs themselves. No liberal arts faculty members can deliver courses in how to teach children how to read. And while elementary math courses can and should be delivered by math faculty, these courses have to be specifically designed with the needs of elementary teachers in mind. A math department at an institution without an elementary teacher preparation program would not offer any courses like the ones elementary teacher candidates need to take.

Standard/program connections

Because of the lack of cooperation from institutions, there is a more complicated landscape of scores and program ratings than we anticipated. See the guide below as to what standards were applied to what programs and how standard scores and program ratings are reported.

Fig. 43. Guide to program ratings and standard scores

	Program rating posted on U.S. News website	Program rating posted on NCTQ website	NCTQ Teacher Prep Review Standards		Score for standard posted on U.S. News website	Score for standard posted on NCTQ website, when data available
Elementary Teacher Prep Program	✓	✓	Selection criteria	Key standards	✓	✓
			Early reading		✓	✓
			Common Core elementary mathematics		✓	✓
			Common Core elementary content		✓	✓
			Student teaching		✓	✓
				English language learners		✓
				Struggling readers		✓
				Classroom management		✓
				Lesson planning		✓
				Assessment and data		✓
				Equity		Not reported this year
				Outcomes		✓
			Evidence of effectiveness		✓	
Secondary Teacher Prep Program	✓	✓	Selection criteria	Key standards	✓	✓
			Common Core middle school content		✓	✓
			Common Core high school content		✓	✓
			Student teaching		✓	✓
				Classroom management		✓
				Lesson planning		✓
				Assessment and data		✓
				Equity		Not reported this year
			Secondary methods		✓	
			Outcomes		✓	
			Evidence of effectiveness		✓	
Special Education Teacher Prep Program	✓	✓	Selection criteria	Key standards		✓
			Early reading			✓
			Common Core elementary mathematics			✓
			Common Core special education content			✓
			Student teaching			✓
			Instructional design for special education			✓
				Equity		Not reported this year
			Outcomes		✓	



Elementary and secondary program ratings reported to *U.S. News & World Report* are based only on “key” elementary and secondary standards, even for the institutions for which we were able to score on more standards. We made this decision so that the rating for any given type of program would be based on scores on the same standards. Program ratings weight scores on individual key standards. In elementary program ratings, the weight of scores on the **Selection Criteria Standard** is heaviest, with the weight of scores on the **Student Teaching Standard** next heaviest, and scores on the **Early Reading, Common Core Elementary Math** and **Common Core Elementary Content Standards** weighted least but equally.⁵⁹ In secondary program ratings, the weight of scores on the relevant content standard(s)⁶⁰ is heaviest, with the weight of scores on the **Selection Criteria Standard** next heaviest and scores on the **Student Teaching Standard** weighted least.

When we were not able to rate a program on a standard, it was simply removed from the sample. Generally, this was due to the program’s refusal to supply the data necessary to evaluate the standards. There are, however, instances in which the program *did* supply the material we requested, but a score could not be determined because the materials were not clear. In such instances the program was removed from the sample, and the score was given as “not rated.” **In no instance was a program given a score on the basis of whether it did or did not provide data. Level of cooperation was not a factor in our evaluations.**

In addition, because we scored large but limited samples of programs on the **Classroom Management, Lesson Planning** and **Assessment and Data Standards**, the fact that a program may not have received a score on one or more of these standards does not imply that there was either a lack of cooperation on the part of its institution or that there was a lack of clarity in materials; the program may simply be one that was not included in the sample. We report that these standards are “not rated” for those programs that are not in the limited samples.⁶¹

For two standards, **Early Reading** and **Common Core Elementary Mathematics**, an alternate scoring process was developed to ensure that a lack of data would not preclude a score. Because elementary preparation is critical to ensuring that elementary and special education teacher candidates are competent to enter the classroom, NCTQ could not allow the lack of cooperation on the part of institutions to place them out of the reach of evaluations on these standards. To that end, a means of evaluating elementary and special education programs on both of these standards using less than complete data was devised after extensive field work.⁶²

Lastly, as discussed on p. 55 results will not be reported this year for the **Equity Standard**.

Quality control

NCTQ’s priority in all of its studies of teacher preparation has been to conduct its evaluations with integrity and to produce reliable results. Because of the scale of the *Teacher Prep Review* and the vast number of decision points involved in data collection, processing and analysis, continuing to produce reliable results demanded new mechanisms and safeguards. With the development of a scoring management system component in our database, we have been able to make quality control an integral, ongoing feature of our evaluation.

RevStat

A variety of aspects of analysis reliability are managed by [RevStat](#), a processing and analysis management system that was designed to be an integral part of NCTQ’s teacher preparation database. Using RevStat, the *Teacher Prep Review* team tracks each standard’s reliability of scores across pairs and teams of analysts at any given time and across various time periods. If reliability issues emerge, the scoring protocols and training are recalibrated as necessary.

In development of RevStat, NCTQ partnered with **UPD Consulting**, a national expert on education management. NCTQ and UPD modeled RevStat on the same principals as the **Baltimore** CitiStat and the **New York City** CompStat processes, which have proven effective in managing institutional performance.

Audit Panel

Although RevStat provides invaluable data on scoring processes, we wanted to ensure that we had the advice of experts who could have the broadest possible vantage point on the reliability of our work. For that reason, we invited a group of eminent education researchers to join an [Audit Panel](#) to provide technical assistance, critique our evaluation processes to date and recommend improvements in subsequent *Teacher Prep Reviews*. Discussion with the panel has both reassured us regarding the utility of the steps we have taken to date to ensure reliability and suggested some refinements we adopted immediately. It also pointed us toward measures we intend to implement in subsequent editions of the *Teacher Prep Review* that will allow us to better understand any sources of variance in scoring processes and thereby use RevStat even more productively. The panel has signed a [summary statement](#) on the reliability of our current scoring processes.

Due Diligence

In October 2012, deans of 47 education schools were invited to participate in a due diligence process to determine whether there were any flaws in programming our database, in our approach to gathering evidence or in our analysis of evidence. Most of the institutions invited to participate were located in **New York, Tennessee** and **Washington** because those states were the first evaluated.⁶³ We also selected a smaller random sample of programs in 13 other states to round out the analysis.

Only 18 deans chose to participate, reviewing our standard-specific findings on their undergraduate elementary and secondary programs.

Of the three areas for potential flaws identified above, the due diligence process revealed none related to programming. However, the process did reveal evidentiary flaws connected with one standard (**Outcomes**) and analytical flaws related to another (**Assessment and Data**). A [report](#) to the Audit Panel, Technical Panel and the 18 institutions that participated outlines how we resolved the methodological issues raised by the due diligence process. All scores on those two standards reflect the changes made to address the flaws identified in the due diligence process.

Limitations

Potential limitations of the *Teacher Prep Review* were evident in advance of its launch, and steps have been taken to minimize or eliminate them:

- *NCTQ's standards for teacher preparation are not sufficiently comprehensive.*

The standards for the first edition address three areas of teacher preparation that the National Research Council identified as the most likely to affect novice teacher effectiveness: selectivity, content preparation and clinical practice.⁶⁴ NCTQ continues to expand (and refine) its standards, with plans to add one additional standard in the 2014 edition of the *Teacher Prep Review* (program rigor) and four in the 2015 edition (adolescent literacy, Common Core English/language arts and social studies, principles of learning, and a revised classroom management standard).



- *How well programs perform against NCTQ standards is no substitute for measuring the effectiveness of their graduates.*

We absolutely agree that measures of effectiveness are ultimately what is most important and therefore have two standards with a focus on outcomes (**Outcomes** and **Evidence of Effectiveness**). However, measures on graduate effectiveness are available for only a very small fraction of the programs that we examine (only one program in the first edition). NCTQ's other standards are intended to complement, not supplant, what should always be the focus of any program: its outcomes. By describing the basic elements of what any high-quality teacher preparation program must accomplish, our intent is to provide programs with specific guidance for improving their outcomes. Even programs whose graduates appear to be relatively more effective than those from other programs in a state can use our standards to increase the likelihood that their graduates will reach their greatest potential as effective teachers.

- *Because of its scale, the Teacher Prep Review relies on analysis of document-derived data rather than data collected from site visits.*

It is not the intention of the *Teacher Prep Review* to substitute for high-quality, on-the-ground inspections as one might expect an accrediting body or government authority to perform. The intention is to provide an in-depth examination of program policy and design, down to the course level, which in itself is something that has never been accomplished for any field within higher education. We restrict our evaluation to only program elements that can be reliably and validly assessed by readily obtained program documents.

- *The Teacher Prep Review did not survey teacher preparation programs about unique aspects of their programs. Without this information, unique aspects may not be evident to an outside reviewer and therefore may not affect evaluations as they should.*

NCTQ field tested this proposition to see whether our evaluations are sufficiently sensitive to unique aspects of programs. In our largest field test, we evaluated Illinois teacher preparation programs against 39 standards using only available documents and then re-evaluated programs by also talking directly with program officials. This allowed us to determine if our initial conclusions would have differed if our methodology had also included dialogue with officials.

While we found that these conversations did elicit unique features for a small number of programs, we also found that these unique features could be elicited by adjusting how we examined the documents themselves. The bottom line was that we often found that there are unique aspects of a program that *did* affect our evaluations, but that we were able to routinely capture them in the documents NCTQ obtained for general analysis.

- *Because most institutions have chosen not to cooperate with the Teacher Prep Review, and only public institutions could be compelled to participate through open-records requests, the sample is biased, comprised mostly of public institutions.*

Because our analysis of many years of field-test results have never indicated a significant difference between preparation in public versus private institutions, this limitation does not have much practical effect in terms of general results. Our most recent and largest study of teacher preparation programs in **Illinois** yielded no consistent patterns of differences between the 32 programs in public institutions and the 79 programs in private institutions.

We continue to make every effort to gather data on private programs even in the face of their lack of cooperation.

Teachers have a grand responsibility. If they are not prepared, the students are the ones who suffer. It's not about teachers; it's about the students. And students who have underprepared teachers are getting further and further behind. This has to stop.

– Marlowe Brant,
5th and 6th grade
English as a Second
Language teacher;
7th grade creative
writing teacher
Respondent to
NCTQ survey

- *Because most of our data were obtained without the cooperation of institutions, we were unable to use “topic mapping” by teacher preparation program staff to comprehensively identify relevant coursework for evaluation of a variety of standards. (We had anticipated that institutions would voluntarily upload their data for the Teacher Prep Review to a website that has a topic mapping section.) In an elementary program, the program staff would have identified which coursework would have been relevant to our analysis of the following distinct areas: reading, math, assessment, methods, classroom management and diverse learners.*

We have been as expansive as possible in our efforts to identify required coursework to evaluate the standards for which coursework is relevant. We have also erred on the side of caution and chosen not to evaluate programs on some standards if we think it is possible that relevant data is contained in a syllabus we have not been able to obtain. In addition, in late 2012, we conducted a due diligence process, one of the purposes of which was to ascertain if our internal topic mapping had been accurate. It revealed that we had not been examining all of the relevant coursework needed to rate programs fairly on the **Assessment and Data** standard, so we modified our process and reevaluated all programs under that new process.

- *Because the lack of cooperation by institutions has placed the burden of processing open-records requests and litigation on NCTQ, data collected at the beginning of the extended data collection window may have become outdated by the end of it.*

We collected 99 percent of the data used in the Review in 2011 and 2012. Our standards' scores reflect the programs described by those documents. We encourage programs to send us documents that may reflect changes made after we completed our analysis. We will use those new materials to update our ratings in the second edition of the *Teacher Prep Review*, which will be published in June 2014.

FAQs on the 2013 Teacher Prep Ratings

By [ROBERT MORSE](#)

June 18, 2013

The National Council on Teacher Quality has just released the first [NCTQ Teacher Prep Ratings](#) with U.S. News & World Report as the publisher. While the NCTQ website has ratings on 2,420 teacher preparation programs at 1,130 institutions, on usnews.com we've published a subset: overall program ratings for 1,200 undergraduate and graduate teacher preparation programs offered at 608 schools.

Here are answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about this project and U.S. News's role.

Why is U.S. News publishing NCTQ's ratings of teacher preparation programs?

U.S. News believes that teacher education programs have not been fully scrutinized in the past. There is a big push nationwide to improve both teacher quality and the quality of schools at the K-12 level. The new ratings are part of this national effort to hold teacher preparation programs accountable for the quality of their graduates.

We hope these new ratings will help lead to improvements in teacher preparation programs and address the lack of comparable information about these programs.

For more details, see U.S. News Editor Brian Kelly's [opinion on the NCTQ ratings](#).

What role did U.S. News play in developing the methodology, collecting data from teacher education programs and compiling the NCTQ Teacher Prep Ratings?

U.S. News did not play a role in these areas. NCTQ developed the methodology with input from many higher education experts, collected the data used to compute the ratings directly from education schools and compiled and calculated the Teacher Prep Ratings.

Do these new NCTQ ratings replace the U.S. News Best Education Schools rankings?

No, the NCTQ Teacher Prep Ratings are offered in addition to what U.S. News does now. U.S. News will continue to publish the [Best Education Schools](#) rankings as part of our annual Best Graduate Schools rankings.

How are the U.S. News Best Education Schools rankings different from the NCTQ Teacher Prep Ratings?

The methodologies used to compile the U.S. News rankings and the NCTQ ratings are completely different and fully independent from each other.

[User Log-in](#)

At Columbia University, 99 percent of students return after freshman year. [Check out U.S. News's College Compass for more!](#)

The [methodology](#) focused on the research output of those doctoral programs and did not evaluate any teacher preparation programs at those education schools.

NCTQ's Teacher Prep Ratings evaluated 1,200 programs at 608 colleges and universities with programs that prepare elementary and secondary teachers and only rated the teacher preparation programs at those schools.

U.S. News did not use any data from the NCTQ Teacher Prep Ratings to compute our Best Education Schools rankings, and similarly, NCTQ did not use any data from the U.S. News Best Education Schools rankings to compute its Teacher Prep Ratings.

It's also important to note that the U.S. News Best Education Schools is a numerical ranking of each graduate education school based on how each school's data compares with all other graduate education schools.

In contrast, the NCTQ Teacher Prep Ratings use a star system that separately rates up to four teacher preparation programs at an education school based on how each program performed on NCTQ's rating standards.

Has U.S. News worked with other organizations to conduct rankings in the past?

Yes, many of the rankings U.S. News publishes are the result of finding highly knowledgeable partners and working with them to produce rankings.

U.S. News currently partners with Best Lawyers to publish the [Best Law Firms](#) rankings; with RTI International to produce our [Best Hospitals](#) rankings; and with the American Institutes for Research to create the [Best High Schools](#) rankings.



U.S. News has published a subset of the NCTQ ratings of programs that train elementary and secondary teachers.

How can I locate the methodology used to compile the 2013 NCTQ Teacher Prep Ratings?

Visit the [NCTQ site](#) to find the complete methodology and other detailed information about how the NCTQ ratings were compiled.

I have a question about the data or methodologies used in the 2013 NCTQ Teacher Prep Ratings. Whom should I contact?

Please send your inquiry via email to [Laura Johnson](#) at NCTQ.

I am in the media and have questions about the 2013 NCTQ Teacher Prep Ratings. Whom should I contact?

Please send your inquiry via email to [Laura Johnson](#) at NCTQ.

Tags: [rankings](#), [teachers](#), [graduate schools](#), [colleges](#), [education graduate school](#), [education](#)



Standards and Indicators for NCTQ Teacher Prep Review

The talent teachers need

Standard 1: Selection Criteria.

The program screens for academic caliber in selecting teacher candidates.

Standard applies to: Elementary, Secondary and Special Education programs.

Indicators that the program meets the standard:

- 1.1 At the undergraduate level, the program utilizes for admission a requirement of a GPA of 3.0 or higher either for college preparatory coursework in high school (in cases of admission for preparation in the first several years of college) or for coursework in the first two years of college.
- 1.2 In the absence of the requirement for admission of a GPA of 3.0 or higher, the college or university is either sufficiently selective (as indicated by a mean combined SAT mathematics and verbal score of 1120 or above or a mean ACT composite score of 24 or above), or the program utilizes a standardized test of academic proficiency that allows comparison of applicants to the general college-going population and selection of applicants in the top half of that population.
- 1.3 At the graduate level, the program utilizes for admission consideration both an applicant's undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or above (overall or in upper division coursework) and either:

- The score on one of the standardized tests of academic proficiency used commonly in higher education for graduate admissions (e.g., the GRE).

OR

- An audition process that includes, but need not be limited to, tasks that assess the applicant's 1) classroom presence, 2) problem-solving and interpersonal skills, and 3) capacity to persevere in the pursuit of improved student outcomes.

1.4 STRONG DESIGN

An undergraduate program will receive a "strong design" designation in either of the following cases:

- The program meets the selectivity standard based on 1.1 above and also satisfies indicator 1.2, either due to the selectivity of the institution in which it is housed or due to its utilization of a standardized test of academic proficiency that allows comparison of applicants to the general college-going population and selection of applicants in the top half of that population.

OR

- The program meets the selectivity standard based on 1.1 or 1.2 above AND the racial diversity of the program, in combination with all other undergraduate teacher preparation programs at its institution, is greater than the racial diversity of the institution itself.

1.5 STRONG DESIGN

A graduate program will receive a "strong design" designation if it meets the selectivity standard based on 1.3 above AND the racial diversity of the program in combination with all other graduate teacher preparation programs at its institution is greater than the racial diversity of the state's teachers.

What teachers should know

Standard 2: Early Reading.

The program trains teacher candidates to teach reading as prescribed by the Common Core State Standards.

Standard applies to: Elementary and Special Education programs.

Indicators that the program meets the standard:

- 2.1 Coursework lectures and practice adequately cover the five essential components of effective reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension strategies.

The alignment of coursework content with instruction in using screening, diagnostic and progress monitoring assessments will also be analyzed, but individual institutions will not be rated in this analysis.

- 2.2 Textbooks used in reading courses support effective reading instruction.
- 2.3 All relevant required courses address at least one of the five essential components.
- 2.4 STRONG DESIGN

A program that satisfies indicators 2.1-2.3 will receive a designation of "strong design" if every relevant required course: 1) achieves the highest or second highest score on each of the five essential components of effective reading instruction, and 2) without exception, supports effective reading instruction with required textbooks that are rated "acceptable" in the textbook evaluation process.

Standard 3: English Language Learners.

The program prepares elementary teacher candidates to teach reading to English-language learners.

Standard applies to: Elementary programs.

Indicators that the program meets the standard:

- 3.1 Reading courses deliver the instructional strategies necessary for teaching English language learners and require candidates to practice such strategies.

Standard 4: Struggling Readers.

The program prepares elementary teacher candidates to teach reading skills to students at risk of reading failure.

Standard applies to: Elementary programs.

Indicators that the program meets the standard:

- 4.1 Reading courses deliver the instructional strategies necessary for teaching struggling readers and require candidates to practice such strategies.

Standard 5: Common Core Elementary Mathematics.

The program prepares teacher candidates to successfully teach to the Common Core State Standards for elementary math.

Standard applies to: Elementary and Special Education programs.

Indicators that the program meets the standard:

- 5.1 Programs require candidates to take a course sequence that thoroughly covers essential elementary mathematics topics in numbers and operations, algebra, geometry and data analysis.
- 5.2 Textbooks used in these courses support instruction on essential topics of elementary mathematics.
- 5.3 The program requires an elementary mathematics methods course that includes adequate field work or a concurrent practicum that holds teacher candidates individually accountable for mastering instructional skills.
- 5.4 STRONG DESIGN

A program will earn a "strong design" designation if adequate elementary mathematics content is combined with elementary mathematics methods instruction in a coordinated set or sequence of courses that satisfies indicators 5.1-5.3.

Standard 6: Common Core Elementary Content.

The program ensures that teacher candidates have the broad content preparation necessary to successfully teach to the Common Core State Standards.

Standard applies to: Elementary programs.

In order to be effective, elementary school teachers have always needed to have solid, wide-ranging knowledge on many subjects. With the advent of the Common Core Standards, which have already been adopted in 45 states (and the District of Columbia) and which are considerably more demanding than most state standards, the bar on elementary teachers' content preparation has only been raised higher. Traditional state "English Language Arts" standards, which in a number of states were agnostic about content knowledge, will soon give way to far more rigorous standards which will demand that students (and hence their teachers) have background knowledge across all subject areas, including topics in history, social science and science.

Given the content deficiencies with which many high school graduates, including teacher candidates, enter college, preparing teachers for these demands will be challenging. It is with this backdrop that we approached the articulation of this standard and its indicators, which we recognize places a substantial, though justifiable, burden of coursework.

Institutions could reduce this burden if their states demanded that all elementary teacher candidates take rigorous content licensing exams, with cut-scores broken out by subject, upon admission to the preparation program. But since no state at the present time does this, institutions need to ensure that elementary teacher candidates have the preparation, through coursework and test-out options available through the Praxis II (specifically the new Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects test), Advanced Placement, College Level Examination Program (CLEP) and SAT II exams, that readies them to teach their students

Indicators that the program meets the standard:

- 6.1** At the undergraduate level, the institution:
- Requires candidates to take at least one course in each topic from each of the subject areas listed below.
 - o All coursework except children's literature should only be taught in liberal arts departments.
 - o Course content must be broad enough to give candidates the knowledge base to teach the elementary curriculum.
 - Exempts candidates from specific course requirements on the basis of standardized assessments commonly recognized as demonstrating content mastery at the level provided by post-secondary or rigorous secondary instruction (e.g., AP, CLEP, SAT II).

Subject A: Literature and composition

Topic (1): World literature

Topic (2): American literature

Topic (3): Writing, grammar and composition

Topic (4): Children's literature

Subject B: History and geography

Topic (1): Early American history

Topic (2): Modern American history/government

Topic (3): World history - modern

Topic (4): World history - ancient

Topic (5): Geography

Subject C: Science (at least one course with lab)

Topic (1): Biology

Topic (2): Chemistry

Topic (3): Physics/physical science

Subject D: Fine arts

Topic (1): Music history

Topic (2): Art history

Elementary mathematics (see Standard 5)

Three courses (or two courses, in highly selective institutions) designed for the teacher and imparting content in numbers and operations, algebra, geometry and data analysis.

- 6.2** For undergraduate programs, the teacher candidate completes an 18-semester credit hour concentration in a subject relevant to the elementary curriculum. (For purposes of concentration credit hour calculations, general education coursework may be counted regardless of whether an institution would allow it to count towards a major.)

6.3 At the graduate level, the burden posed by a stringent credit count does not relieve the program of its responsibility to ensure that elementary teacher candidates have adequate content knowledge preparation. Graduate elementary candidates must have both sufficient breadth of knowledge (as indicated by completion of undergraduate courses in the topic areas as delineated in indicator 6.1, or by passing rigorous tests of knowledge in those areas), as well as sufficient depth of knowledge in a single subject as shown by completing an 18-semester credit hour concentration in a single subject relevant to the elementary curriculum. If a candidate has significant weaknesses in content knowledge, the program works with the candidate to remedy them.

- When applications to the program, catalogs or other public documents do not describe such a process, the presumption will be made that no content preparation requirements are imposed on graduate teacher candidates.

6.4 STRONG DESIGN

A program will earn a "strong design" designation if coursework: 1) fulfills two to four topic requirements in Literature and Composition, three to five in History and Geography, two to three (with at least one lab) in Science, and one to two in Fine Arts, or 2) fulfills topics requirements in the first three subject areas with somewhat lesser coverage than specified in (1), but credit is also awarded for a concentration.

Standard 7: Common Core Middle School Content.

The program ensures that teacher candidates have the content preparation necessary to successfully teach to the Common Core State Standards.

Standard applies to: Secondary programs.

Higher education institutions have traditionally articulated their vision of teacher preparedness in a subject area by defining a prescribed course of study completed via a major or minor. For middle school teachers charged with teaching many different subjects, a credit count system is particularly challenging, especially for teacher candidates entering graduate programs of study.

Indicators that the program meets the standard:

- 7.1 Using an outcomes-based approach, each pathway to middle school certification listed below requires that in every subject, a teacher will be qualified to teach either:
- A series of rigorous stand-alone tests.
 - OR
 - A rigorous test of multiple subject areas that provides cut-scores for each specific subject on the test.

Absent such licensing tests used to verify competency, we look for institutions to require or certify courses of study as follows:

- 7.2 At the undergraduate level, a middle school teacher candidate seeking certification in mathematics must have a major consisting of at least 30 semester credit hours, including at least 24 credit hours of general audience* mathematics coursework.
- 7.3 A middle school teacher candidate seeking certification in English/language arts must have a major consisting of at least 30 semester credit hours, including at least 24 credit hours of general audience English coursework.

- 7.4 A middle school teacher candidate seeking certification in the sciences must have either:
- A major in a single teachable science discipline (biology, chemistry or physics) of at least 30 semester credit hours including at least 24 credit hours of general audience coursework.
- OR
- A major in general science that consists of at least 15 credit hours (the equivalent of one minor) in one teachable science discipline (biology, chemistry or physics).
- 7.5 A middle school teacher candidate seeking certification in the social sciences must have either:
- A major in a single teachable social science discipline (history, government/political science or economics) of at least 30 semester credit hours, including at least 24 credit hours of general audience coursework.
- OR
- A major in general social science that consists of at least 15 credit hours (the equivalent of one minor) in history.
- 7.6 If certification in multiple subjects is offered, a middle school teacher candidate seeking certification in multiple subjects must have at least 15 semester credit hours (the equivalent of a minor) in a single discipline relevant to each of the subject areas. (For example, dual certification in mathematics and science must consist of the equivalent of a minor in mathematics and a minor in biology, not the equivalent of a minor in mathematics and a minor in general science.)

*Courses which are intended for any student on campus, not just prospective teachers.

- 7.7 At the graduate level, the burden posed by a stringent credit count does not relieve the program of its responsibility to ensure that middle school teacher candidates in each pathway to certification (mathematics, English, the sciences, the social sciences, multiple subjects) meet requirements for content knowledge preparation. If candidates have significant weaknesses in content knowledge, the program works with the candidate to remedy them.
- When applications to the program, catalogs or other public documents do not describe such a process, the presumption will be made that no content preparation requirements are imposed on graduate teacher candidates.

Standard 8: Common Core High School Content.

The program ensures that teacher candidates have the content preparation necessary to successfully teach to the Common Core State Standards.

Standard applies to: Secondary programs.

Higher education institutions have traditionally articulated their vision of teacher preparedness in a subject area by defining a prescribed course of study through a major or minor. For high school teachers charged with teaching many different subjects subsumed under one certification, pursuing multiple majors is impractical. A credit count system is also particularly challenging to impose on teacher candidates entering graduate programs of study.

Indicators that the program meets the standard:

8.1 Using an outcomes-based approach, each pathway to high school certification listed below requires that in every subject, the teacher will be qualified to teach either:

- A series of rigorous standalone tests.

OR

- A rigorous test of multiple subject areas that provides cut-scores for each separate subject-specific test section.

Absent such licensing tests used to verify competency, we look for institutions to require or verify courses of study as follows:

8.2 At the undergraduate level, a high school teacher candidate seeking certification in mathematics must have a major consisting of at least 30 semester credit hours, including at least 24 credit hours of general audience* mathematics coursework.

8.3 A high school teacher candidate seeking certification in English must have a major consisting of at least 30 semester credit hours, including at least 24 credit hours of general audience English coursework.

8.4 A high school teacher candidate seeking science certification in a state that requires single-subject certification must have a major in the single teachable science discipline for which certification will be awarded of at least 30 semester credit hours, including at least 24 credit hours of general audience coursework. A high school teacher candidate seeking science certification in a state that offers general science certification must have coursework preparation that consists of at least 15 credit hours (the equivalent of one minor) in at least two teachable science disciplines (biology, chemistry or physics).

8.5 A high school teacher candidate seeking social science certification in a state that requires single-subject certification must have a major in the single teachable social science discipline for which certification will be awarded of at least 30 semester credit hours, including at least 24 credit hours of general audience coursework. A high school teacher candidate seeking social science certification in a state that offers social science certification must have a major in history, or coursework preparation that consists of at least 15 credit hours (the equivalent of one minor) in history and in at least one other teachable social science (government/political science, economics or psychology).

*Courses which are intended for any student on campus, not just prospective teachers.

8.6 At the graduate level, the burden posed by a stringent credit count does not relieve the program of its responsibility to ensure that high school teacher candidates in each pathway to certification (mathematics, English, the sciences, the social sciences) meet requirements for content knowledge preparation. If candidates have significant weaknesses in content knowledge, the program works with the candidate to remedy them.

- When applications to the program, catalogs or other public documents do not describe such a process, the presumption will be made that no content preparation requirements are imposed on graduate teacher candidates.

Standard 9: Common Core Content for Special Education.

The program ensures that teacher candidates' content preparation aligns with the Common Core State Standards in the grades they are certified to teach.

Standard applies to: Special Education programs.

Indicators that the program meets the standard:

- 9.1 Programs training special education teacher candidates for an elementary setting must require the same content preparation as specified in elementary content preparation indicators 6.1 and 6.3.
- 9.2 Undergraduate programs training special education teachers for secondary settings require candidates to earn subject-area minors (equivalent to at least 15 semester credit hours) in at least two of the following disciplines: English; mathematics; history; biology; chemistry or physics. Graduate programs address content preparation along the lines specified in secondary content preparation indicator 7.7, with appropriate modification to accommodate preparation in two disciplines.
- 9.3 Programs residing in a state where discrete elementary and secondary special education licenses are available should require content preparation for candidates that sufficiently focuses either on elementary or secondary preparation (as described above).

What teachers should be able to do

Standard 10: Classroom Management.

The program trains teacher candidates to successfully manage classrooms.

Standard applies to: Elementary and Secondary programs.

Typical formative or summative student teacher evaluation instruments used by either the student teacher's supervisor, cooperating teacher or both have the following characteristics:

Indicators that the program meets the standard:

- 10.1 At least one specifically addresses the student teacher's ability to establish a positive learning environment and reinforce standards of classroom behavior.
- 10.2 At least one specifically addresses the student teacher's appropriate use of low profile desists for managing minimally disruptive behavior.
- 10.3 At least one specifically addresses the student teacher's appropriate use of disciplinary action to handle disruptive student misbehavior.

10.4 Strong design indicator:

A program will earn a "strong design" designation if typical formative and summative student teacher evaluation instruments used by the student teacher's supervisor have the following characteristics:

- They specifically address the student teacher's a) ability to establish a positive learning environment and standards of classroom behavior, b) appropriate use of low profile desists for managing minimally disruptive behavior, and c) appropriate use of disciplinary action to handle disruptive student misbehavior.
- They require comments by the supervisor to support each rating.
- They allow the cooperating teacher to document his/her evaluation of the candidate's classroom management techniques in one of the following ways: a) using the same evaluation instrument used by the student teacher's supervisor, b) using an evaluation instrument that is substantially similar to that used by the student teacher's supervisor, or c) recording his or her evaluation on the student teacher's supervisor's evaluation instrument.

Standard 11: Lesson Planning.

The program trains teacher candidates how to plan lessons.

Standard applies to: Elementary and Secondary programs.

Project or portfolio assignments associated with either student teaching, an exit requirement or licensure demonstrate that the program expects the teacher candidate to meet the following challenges of instructional design for the classroom:

Indicators that the program meets the standard:

- 11.1 Identifying technology applications that will boost instruction and how they will do so.
- 11.2 Anchoring instruction in the state's K-12 learning standards and/or the Common Core state standards, as appropriate.
- 11.3 Addressing the needs of English-language learners.
- 11.4 Accommodating students with special needs.
- 11.5 Extending instruction for students who have demonstrated proficiency in relevant standards.
- 11.6 In addition, none of the program's instructional planning assignments encourage candidates to use pseudo-scientific methods of instruction.
- 11.7 In addition, the program requires that throughout their student teaching experience, teacher candidates develop written instructional plans whose content follows explicit instructional guidelines.

Standard 12: Assessment and Data.

The program trains teacher candidates how to assess learning and use student performance data to inform instruction.

Standard applies to: Elementary and Secondary programs.

Indicators that the program meets the standard:

- 12.1 The instructional role of standardized tests, particularly the program state's standardized tests, is addressed.
- 12.2 Teacher candidates are required to prepare formative and summative classroom assessments.

12.3 Individually and in teams, teacher candidates are taught how to interpret and apply data from both standardized and classroom assessments in order to inform instruction.

12.4 STRONG DESIGN

A program will receive a "strong design" designation if instruction satisfying indicators 12.1-12.3 is provided through a combination of 1) a core data literacy course also addressing the use and misuse of assessment data, the issue of bias, and the meaning of validity and reliability in the context of testing, and 2) one or more courses addressing subject-specific pedagogical data literacy and including field work assessment assignments closely aligned with that instruction.

Standard 13: Equity.

The program ensures that teacher candidates experience schools that are successful serving students who have been traditionally underserved.

Standard applies to: Elementary, Secondary and Special Education programs.

Programs will not be scored for their performance relative to this standard. As NCTQ has done in an earlier review of teacher preparation programs, data on program performance will be made publicly available in a manner that allows for comparison of institutions in relative geographic proximity.

Indicators that the program meets the standard:

13.1 When evaluated in the context of teacher preparation programs that are in relative geographic proximity, the proportion of a program's student teaching placements that are made in schools that can be classified as "high functioning and high needs" can signal a commitment to ensuring that all teacher candidates experience teaching in such learning environments. For purposes of classification, schools are designated as "high functioning and high needs" if:

- Average student performance in reading and mathematics both exceed the district average or the school has been designated by its state as having recently made significant improvements in average student performance in reading and mathematics.

AND

- Forty percent or more of students are eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals.

13.2 STRONG DESIGN

A program will receive a "strong design" designation if a relatively large proportion of its student teaching placement sites are in "high functioning and high needs" schools and every teacher candidate experiences (through activities ranging from structured observations to student teaching) traditional or public charter schools, or individual classrooms that are successfully serving high needs populations, with success defined as exceeding expectations on state assessments and in graduation rates.

Standard 14: Student Teaching.

The program ensures that teacher candidates have a strong student teaching experience.

Standard applies to: Elementary, Secondary and Special Education programs.

Indicators that the program meets the standard:

14.1 The student teacher is observed and provided written feedback at least five times at regular intervals during the semester.

- 14.2 The program communicates clearly to the school district that cooperating teachers must:
- Be proven capable mentors OR receive mentorship training.
- AND
- Be proven effective instructors (as measured by student performance).
- 14.3 The program plays an active role in selecting cooperating teachers, as indicated by the fact that its selection from teachers nominated by school district personnel is informed by substantive information that bears on their capacity to excel as cooperating teachers.
- 14.4 STRONG DESIGN

A program will receive a "strong design" designation if it meets the student teaching standard based on 14.1-14.3 above and also both:

- Screens cooperating teachers using documentation or demonstrations of effective instruction.
- AND
- Communicates clear consequences for failing student teaching, including making alternative degrees available should program exit be necessary.

Standard 15: Secondary Methods.

The program requires teacher candidates to practice instructional techniques specific to their content area.
Standard applies to: Secondary programs.

Indicators that the program meets the standard:

- 15.1 The program requires teacher candidates to take a subject-specific methods course in the area of certification.
- 15.2 Methods courses focus on specific instructional strategies that will improve the delivery of content and include field work or a concurrent practicum that holds teacher candidates individually accountable for mastering instructional skills.

Standard 16: Instructional Design for Special Education.

The program trains candidates to design instruction for teaching students with special needs.
Standard applies to: Special Education programs.

Indicators that the program meets the standard:

- 16.1 The program requires several courses (or the equivalent) designed for special education candidates with a strong focus on instructional design in a particular content area (e.g., reading, mathematics, science, social studies) or in multiple content areas.
- 16.2 More than half of the grade for coursework described in 16.1 is based on assignments that require teacher candidates to design instruction.

- 16.3 Course assignments requiring design of instruction should explicitly address "specifically designed" instruction that can meet a range of students' needs by:
- Development of a curriculum feature, such as developing a new task or lesson that explicitly teaches a new concept or a prerequisite concept.
OR
 - Minor modification of the curriculum (i.e., while keeping the essential curriculum architecture intact, changing a specific feature in order to, for example, add more positive examples of a concept).
OR
 - Major adaptations (i.e., while keeping the essential curriculum architecture intact, changing a specific feature in order to, for example, add more positive examples of a concept).
OR
 - Major enhancements to the curriculum (i.e., designing a template involving an entirely new curriculum architecture in order to adopt the content of an existing lesson to student needs).

Outcomes

Standard 17: Outcomes.

The program and institution collect and monitor data on their graduates.

Standard applies to: Elementary, Secondary and Special Education programs.

Indicators that the program meets the standard:

- 17.1 The institution surveys its graduates regarding topics relevant to program evaluation.
- 17.2 The institution surveys its graduates' employers about their professional performance.
- 17.3 The institution secures data from teacher performance assessments (e.g., California's PACT) administered to candidates just prior to or at graduation.
- 17.4 Unless state data systems preclude access to meaningful data, the institution secures growth data on its graduates' students, including any teacher evaluations which are based at least partially on such data.
- 17.5 All forms of data noted are collected on an established timetable that supports regular program evaluation.
- 17.6 STRONG DESIGN

An institution that satisfies indicators 17.1-17.5 and is able to secure student-growth data on its graduates (indicator 17.4) from a state data system will receive a "strong design" designation if it demonstrates that it uses the data for program improvements. Documents that may be used for this demonstration include those that pertain to redesigned courses or clinical experiences; changes in student teacher assessment practices; new school partnerships for clinical placements; changes in recruitment and selection practices.

17.7 STRONG DESIGN

In the absence of analyses conducted by the state, an institution that has secured student- growth data on its graduates (indicator 17.4) through its own devices and has satisfied all other indicators may also receive a "strong design" designation if it demonstrates that it uses the data for program improvements. Documents that may be used for this demonstration include those that pertain to redesigned courses or clinical experiences; changes in student teacher assessment practices; new school partnerships for clinical placements; changes in recruitment and selection practices.

17.8 STRONG DESIGN

In the absence of analyses conducted by the state and the capacity to gain access to meaningful student-growth data through its own devices, an institution that satisfies all indicators except for 17.4 will receive a "strong design" designation if it demonstrates that it has developed institutional capacity to use outcomes data for continuous improvement. Documents that may be used for demonstration include the following: an evidence plan enabling the institution to collect, analyze, and draw solid conclusions from data about the impact of program graduates on pupil learning; instruments to assess the teaching skills and classroom teaching performance of its candidates; a formal organizational mechanism to use data to improve the preparation program; a plan to measure and report persistence rates for a complete cohort of its graduates.

Standard 18: Evidence of Effectiveness.

The program's graduates have a positive impact on student learning.

Standard applies to: Elementary and Secondary programs.

Student data systems that allow evaluation of teacher preparation programs now exist in only a small number of states. And even in those states, a first generation of systems may soon be supplanted by a second generation. This standard and its indicator will develop in parallel with the development of student data systems nationwide.

For this first review of teacher preparation programs, the only programs that will be evaluated are those located in states in which student data systems allow association with graduates in their first year or two years of teaching with either:

- A determination of individual student growth.
- OR
- A determination of the teachers' contribution to individual student growth.

Any institution located in a state whose data and evaluation systems do not meet either of these two criteria will receive a rating indicating that the standard is "not applicable."

NCTQ's own preference would be that only programs whose graduates on average are effective (i.e., at least half of a program's graduates produce student learning gains in their first year) would meet this standard. But the theory and practice of using student growth data to assess teacher preparation quality are still in their infancies, so we cannot at this point impose such a threshold. As more states build adequate data systems - a process that has been greatly accelerated by Race to the Top - we will adjust the standard and indicator accordingly.

Indicators that the program meets the standard:

- 18.1** The state's own criteria for evaluating and rating teacher preparation programs and identifying those that meet or exceed state standards will determine a program's rating under this standard.



National Council on
Teacher Quality

Contact | Press |

SIGN UP

Stay up to date
on the news,
research and
policies that
affect educators

About | TQ In Your State | [Teacher Prep](#) | State Policy | District Policy | Reports | Commentary

NCTQ Teacher Prep



[Our Approach](#) | [Findings](#) | [Program Search](#) | [Resources](#) | [Reports](#)

[Home](#) > [Teacher Prep](#) > [Findings](#) > [By State](#) > [New Mexico](#)

Findings by State - New Mexico

[Overview](#)

[Institution List](#)

[State Context](#)

Overview

Scope of Review in New Mexico

971	New teachers from the state's higher education institutions included in Review (2010)
8	Institutions evaluated by NCTQ in the 2013 Review -8 elementary programs, undergraduate (UG) and graduate (G) -8 secondary programs, undergraduate (UG) and graduate (G)
6	Institutions with sufficient data for an <u>overall</u> program rating -Collectively supplying 96% of the state's traditionally trained teachers -7 elementary programs, undergraduate (UG) and graduate (G) -6 secondary programs, undergraduate (UG) and graduate (G)
50%	Institutions sharing information for the Review

Big "take-aways" about teacher preparation in New Mexico:

- **Highly rated programs** -- Across the country, NCTQ identified 21 elementary programs (4 percent of those rated) and 84 secondary programs (14 percent) for the *Teacher Prep Review* Honor Roll, meaning that a program earns at least three out of four possible stars. **No New Mexico programs are on the Honor Roll.**

- **Selectivity in admissions** -- The *Review* found that **not one of the elementary and secondary programs in New Mexico restrict admissions to the top half of the college-going population**, compared to 28 percent nationwide. Countries where students consistently outperform the U.S. typically set an even higher bar, with teacher prep programs recruiting candidates

SOURCE: www.nctq.org

from the top third of the college-going population.

Some worry that increasing admissions requirements will have a negative effect on the diversity of teacher candidates. By increasing the rigor and therefore the prestige of teacher preparation the profession will attract more talent, including talented minorities. This is not an impossible dream: 83 programs across the country earn a Strong Design designation on this standard because they are both selective and diverse, although no such programs were found in New Mexico.

- **Early reading instruction** -- Just 14 percent of evaluated elementary programs in New Mexico are preparing teacher candidates in effective, scientifically based reading instruction, an even lower percentage than the small minority of programs (29 percent) providing such training nationally. This is an especially alarming finding, given that the state now requires prospective elementary teachers to pass a test of effective reading instruction that is quite rigorous.

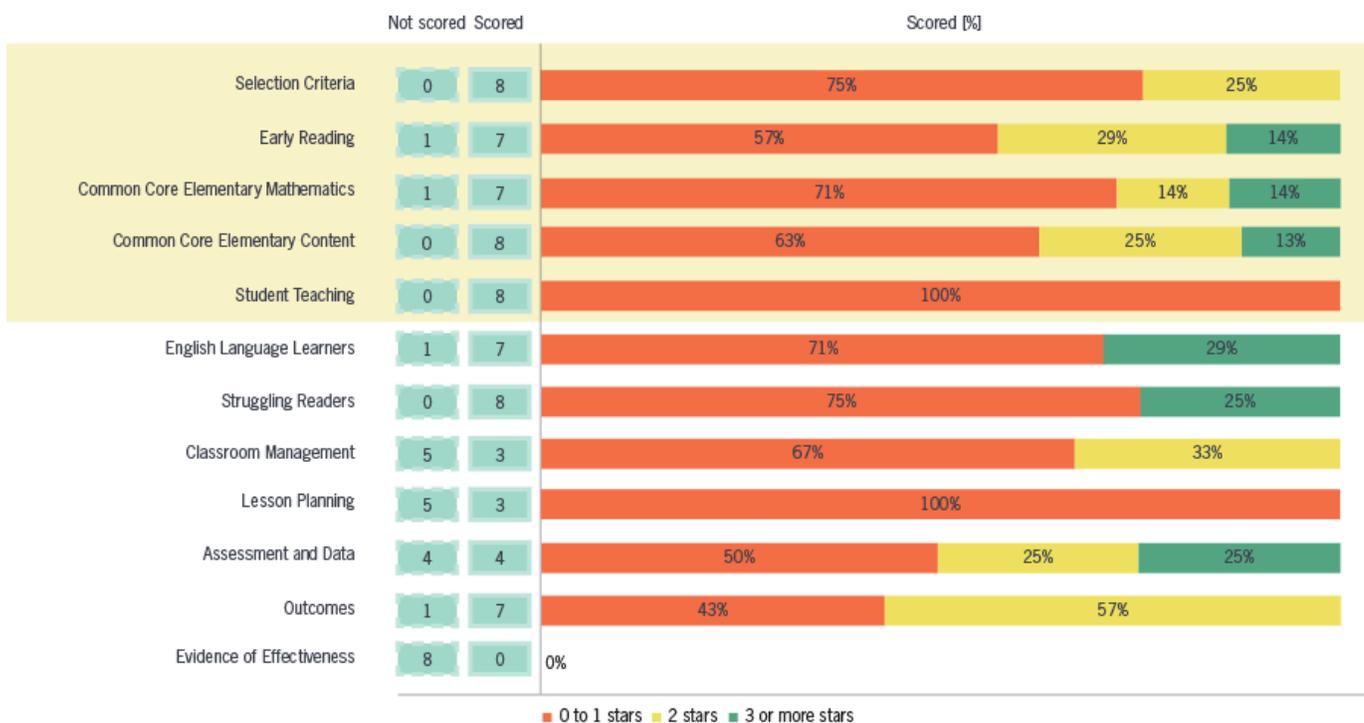
- **Elementary math** -- A mere 19 percent of evaluated elementary programs nationwide provide strong preparation to teach elementary mathematics, training that mirrors the practices of higher performing nations such as Singapore and South Korea. **Only 14 percent of the evaluated elementary programs in New Mexico provide such training.**

- **Student teaching** -- Of the evaluated elementary and secondary programs in New Mexico, **all entirely fail to ensure a high quality student teaching experience**, in which candidates are assigned only to highly skilled teachers and receive frequent concrete feedback. 71 percent of programs across the country failed this standard.

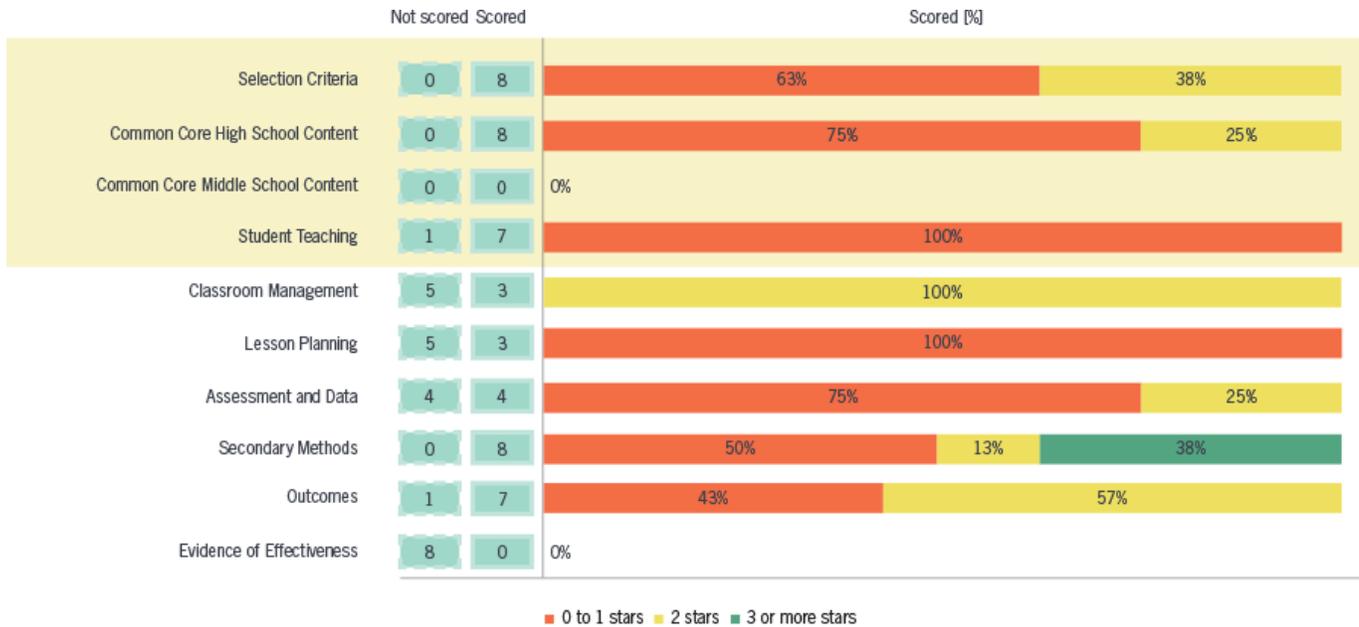
- **Content preparation** -- 13 percent of New Mexico's elementary programs earn three or four stars for providing teacher candidates adequate content preparation, compared to 11 percent of elementary programs nationwide. At the high school level, **none of New Mexico's secondary programs earn four stars for content preparation**, compared to 35 percent nationwide. The major problem at the secondary level is that programs' requirements for general science or general social science certifications do not ensure that candidates are prepared in the content of every subject they will be licensed to teach.

- **Outcome data** -- **None of New Mexico's evaluated programs earn four stars for collecting data on their graduates**, compared to 26 percent of evaluated programs in the national sample. The state does not connect student achievement data to teacher preparation programs or require administration of teacher performance assessments (TPAs), and programs have not taken the initiative to collect any such data on their own. The state does administer a general survey to new teachers and their employers, but it does not include questions that would be useful for teacher preparation program accountability.

New Mexico Elementary Teacher Prep Rating Distribution



New Mexico Secondary Teacher Prep Rating Distribution



Programs that earned 3-star rating or more

No 3-star rated programs

Consumer Alert: Programs earning no stars ⚠

- Eastern New Mexico University - Undergraduate Elementary
- New Mexico Highlands University - Undergraduate Elementary
- New Mexico Highlands University - Undergraduate Secondary
- New Mexico State University - Graduate Elementary
- New Mexico State University - Undergraduate Secondary
- New Mexico State University - Graduate Secondary
- University of New Mexico - Undergraduate Secondary
- University of the Southwest Undergraduate Elementary
- Western New Mexico University Graduate Elementary

Endorsers of the Review in New Mexico

Hanna Skandera, Public Education Department Secretary-Designate

James Lesher, Superintendent, Dulce Independent School District

New Mexico's Teacher Prep Review was made possible by the following foundations and organizations

- Carnegie Corporation of New York
- Gleason Family Foundation
- Laura and John Arnold Foundation
- Michael & Susan Dell Foundation

Searle Freedom Trust
The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation
The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation
The Teaching Commission
Anonymous (2)



National Council on
Teacher Quality



Search this site 

© 2013 National Council on Teacher Quality. All rights reserved.
1420 New York Ave, NW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20005 tel 202 393-0020 | fax 202 393-0095

Ensuring every child has an
effective teacher



NCTQ Teacher Prep



Findings by State - New Mexico

[Overview](#)

[Institution List](#)

[State Context](#)

Institution List

Institutions with Teacher Training Rated

[Eastern New Mexico University](#)

[University of New Mexico](#)

[New Mexico Highlands University](#)

[University of the Southwest](#)

[New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology](#)

[Western New Mexico University](#)

[New Mexico State University](#)

[Northern New Mexico College](#)

Eastern New Mexico University

Annual new teacher production (2010): 114

[Undergraduate Elementary](#)



[Undergraduate Secondary](#)



New Mexico Highlands University

Annual new teacher production (2010): 105

[Undergraduate Elementary](#)



[Undergraduate Secondary](#)



New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology

Annual new teacher production (2010): 2

Graduate Secondary	Some standard scores available
--------------------	--------------------------------

New Mexico State University

Annual new teacher production (2010): 294

Undergraduate Elementary	★☆☆☆☆
Graduate Elementary	★★★★☆
Undergraduate Secondary	★★★★☆
Graduate Secondary	★★★★☆

Northern New Mexico College

Annual new teacher production (2010): 37

Undergraduate Elementary	Some standard scores available
Graduate Secondary	Some standard scores available

University of New Mexico

Annual new teacher production (2010): 336

Undergraduate Elementary	★★★☆☆
Undergraduate Secondary	★★★★☆
Graduate Special Education	★★★☆☆

University of the Southwest

Annual new teacher production (2010): 43

Undergraduate Elementary	★★★★☆
Undergraduate Secondary	★★★☆☆

Western New Mexico University

Annual new teacher production (2010): 40

Graduate Elementary	★★★★☆
---------------------	-------

Institutions with Teacher Training Not Rated

Wayland Baptist University



Figure A

Delivering well-prepared teachers

	2012 Grade	2011 Grade	Admission into Teacher Preparation Programs	Elementary Teacher Preparation	Middle School Teacher Preparation	Secondary Teacher Preparation	Special Education Teacher Preparation	Student Teaching	Teacher Preparation Program Accountability
Alabama	B-	C	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Florida	B-	B-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Indiana	B-	C+	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Tennessee	B-	B-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Connecticut	C+	C-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Kentucky	C+	C-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Massachusetts	C+	C+	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Minnesota	C+	C	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Texas	C+	C+	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Arkansas	C	C	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Georgia	C	C	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Louisiana	C	C	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Mississippi	C	C	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Oklahoma	C	C	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Pennsylvania	C	C	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Rhode Island	C	D+	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
New Hampshire	C-	D	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
New Jersey	C-	D+	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
New York	C-	D+	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Ohio	C-	D+	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
South Carolina	C-	C-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Vermont	C-	D+	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Virginia	C-	C-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
West Virginia	C-	C-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Kansas	D+	D+	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Maine	D+	D	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Maryland	D+	D+	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Michigan	D+	D+	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Missouri	D+	D+	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
New Mexico	D+	D+	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Washington	D+	D+	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Wisconsin	D+	D	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
California	D	D	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Colorado	D	D-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
District of Columbia	D	D	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Hawaii	D	D	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Idaho	D	D	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Illinois	D	D	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Iowa	D	D	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
North Dakota	D	D	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
South Dakota	D	D	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Utah	D	D	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Arizona	D-	D-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Delaware	D-	D-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Nebraska	D-	D-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Nevada	D-	D-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
North Carolina	D-	D-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Oregon	D-	D-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Alaska	F	F	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Montana	F	F	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Wyoming	F	F	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Average State Grade	D+	D							



Tuesday, 18 June 2013 14:16

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For interview s, contact: Lisa Johnson Kiefer
202-478-4502 or lkiefer@aacte.org

(June 18, 2013, Washington, D.C.) – The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) released [a review of the nation's education schools](#) today, making the anticipated splash and garnering heavy media attention with its shock factor. While the results are generating headlines, this review – like most of NCTQ's work – is misleading, unreliable and an effort to promote an ideological agenda rather than a genuine effort to inform the public and improve teacher preparation.

The report raises many questions and fails to provide useful information to drive meaningful improvement. The following points summarize the chief concerns of AACTE and its member institutions:

- This review delivers a predictable slam from NCTQ, an organization that constantly seeks to undermine higher education-based teacher preparation.
 - NCTQ's claims of objectivity are false. As Diane Ravitch [revealed](#) last year, NCTQ was started by the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation "as a new entity to promote alternative certification and to break the power of the hated ed schools," although NCTQ claims it is no longer affiliated with its founders. Despite the [facts](#) showing [otherwise](#), NCTQ believes competition is the best bet for improving teacher preparation.
 - Consistent with its stance on similar professional issues, NCTQ supports [the Growing Education Achievement Training Academies for Teachers and Principals \(GREAT\) Act](#). Although research and effective practices show that comprehensive preparation in content-specific pedagogical strategies, teaching diverse learners, and rigorous clinical experiences are essential to developing effective new teachers, the GREAT Act would require none of these features and, in fact, would lower standards for funded providers.
- This review is based on a review of documents with such inconsistent participation and fragmented inputs that it would not be published by a credible, professional research organization.
 - While NCTQ evaluated 1,130 institutions on various configurations of its standards, the report states that only 10 percent of institutions fully participated.
 - The fine print in the report's Program Ratings section (p. 13) states that elementary program ratings were based on five key "standards," and secondary program ratings were based on three key "areas." NCTQ does not explain how these standards were selected or how heavily each weighed in the review. Yet NCTQ went as far as to label 163 programs with a "Consumer Alert" as a warning to parents, prospective teacher candidates and school districts.
 - On that same Program Ratings page, a graph shows that NCTQ was only able to obtain enough information on classroom management to evaluate 36 percent of the 1,130 programs. Despite this low number and the unclear nature of how standards were applied and weighted, NCTQ concludes that the teacher preparation profession is becoming "an industry of mediocrity, churning out first-year teachers with classroom management skills and content knowledge inadequate to thrive in classrooms..." (p. 1).
 - The American Institutes for Research (AIR) has noted the shortcomings of using document reviews to measure teacher preparation program effectiveness. In its 2012 [Evaluating the Effectiveness of Teacher Preparation Programs for Support and Accountability](#) report, AIR lists several challenges with using process measures to evaluate teacher preparation programs: The research base of a document review is not robust enough to build assessment for accountability based on process measures; process measures do not always accurately capture what actually happens in preparation programs; and process data require complex qualitative measures that are difficult to score reliably across programs.
 - Even NCTQ's own audit panel recognized in [its report](#) that NCTQ must do a better job of "clearly and exhaustively explaining methodology and what findings do and do not mean." The audit panel also questioned the validity of using course syllabi to determine the effectiveness of a program, suggesting that NCTQ must

SOURCE: www.aacte.org

improve its method of "studying how accurately reading syllabi reflects the actual content of classroom instruction."

- This review is a public relations campaign. It does not seek to improve teacher preparation, nor is it a helpful or reliable guide for parents, prospective teacher candidates and the public.
 - NCTQ promotes to the public that its goal is to help improve teacher preparation. Yet NCTQ outright refuses to make rubrics available publicly or individually to institutions to show where programs did and did not meet standards. It does, however, make recommendations to policy makers on how they should regulate preparation programs. If NCTQ's goal was to help improve teacher preparation, rubrics should be released so that programs could utilize that information.
 - In the "Next Steps" for prospective and current students, NCTQ's recommendations are self-promoting, public relations steps intended to further promote the review – not to improve teacher preparation for future teachers.

"AACTE is focused like a laser on targets for change in educator preparation, including the ability to analyze teacher candidates' impact on PK-12 student achievement," said Sharon P. Robinson, Ed.D., president and CEO of AACTE. "We are evaluating teacher candidates' classroom readiness in a rigorous fashion through edTPA, and we are deepening partnerships with the PK-12 community to enrich clinical development and enhance student learning. Despite efforts such as NCTQ's to distract us from our agenda, we are committed to focusing on what research has shown to matter most."

For more information on AACTE members' response to the NCTQ review of the nation's education schools, visit www.aacte.org.

###

AACTE: Serving Learners

The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education is a national alliance of educator preparation programs dedicated to the highest quality professional development of teachers and school leaders in order to enhance PK-12 student learning. The 800 institutions holding AACTE membership represent public and private colleges and universities in every state, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and Guam. AACTE's reach and influence fuels its mission of serving learners by providing all school personnel with superior training and continuing education.

[< Prev](#)

[Next >](#)

Last Updated on Thursday, 20 June 2013 10:25



RECEIVED
VIA E-MAIL

JUL 03 2013

A National Response to NCTQ

by

Dr. Michael A. Morehead, Dean

College of Education

July 11, 2013



A National Response to NCTQ

Contents

- I. Comments by Dr. Michael A. Morehead
- II. Quality of Our Graduates - Letter from Jane Gurnea
- III. Letters from NMSU Students
- IV. Summary of National Discourse on the 2013 NCTQ Prep Review
- V. Scientifically Based Reading Instruction Report Summer 2013
- Summaries from New Mexico Institutions

I. Comments by
Dr. Michael A. Morehead, Dean
College of Education, NMSU

Report Presented to the LESC
July 2012

By: Michael A. Morehead
Dean College of Education
New Mexico State University

In mid-July, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) in collaboration with U.S. News and World Report released a national report reviewing education schools. In response, we have prepared a brief description of our program and summaries of feedback we have received from employers, graduates and cooperating teachers.

Concerns about admission standards for future teachers have been discussed at the national level. Along the same line, the national dialogue also includes related expressed concerns about the quality of students entering teacher education. At NMSU, the admission process includes several steps with numerous checks, reviews and assessments of candidates as they progress through our program. Prior to applying to the Teacher Education Program a candidate must have a 2.5 GPA at the undergraduate level and a 3.0 GPA at the graduate level. Each candidate must meet additional criteria even prior to applying, those include passing a skills test, a C grade or better in all pre-requisites and demonstrate early field experience skills appropriate for that of being a teacher. These prerequisites typically eliminate between 15 to 20 percent of the potential applicants.

Admission selection includes a submission of a portfolio which is reviewed by faculty. The portfolio includes a review of the GPA in the teaching field of the candidate, three written documents submitted by the candidate and several references and evaluations from teachers who have supervised the candidates in schools. The portfolio is reviewed by faculty and scored on a pre-determined rubric. To be admitted to program, a student must attain a certain cut score based on the faculty review of the portfolio. The average GPA of an undergraduate admitted to the NMSU teacher education program is 3.1. Most of the courses taken prior to admission are in the general education core which includes Mathematics, Science, History, English and other non-education classes. Graduate students admitted to the teacher education program often have a degree outside of education and their average GPA upon admission is 3.25. Between 5 and 10 percent of the applicants are denied admission to teacher education.

The next review of candidates occurs prior to the last internship otherwise known as student teaching. The candidate must pass a state content knowledge test prior to admission to Phase 2. This test is in the teaching field the candidate will teach, such as Science, Math and Language Arts. Also required is a portfolio application which includes evaluations from practicing teachers and faculty who have observed the candidate's teaching, model lesson plans, and recommendations. In addition a candidate must have a C grade or better in all education and teaching field classes. Between 5 and 10 percent of the applicants are denied admission to the final internship.

The student teaching experience lasts fifteen weeks and the student is assigned to an experienced educator who has at least 3 years of experience and has been approved by both the schools and university. The selection of the cooperating teacher is done in collaboration with the schools. The expectations of the cooperating teacher includes being a good mentor, an excellent teacher and one who can provide appropriate and accurate feedback. About 3 to 5 percent of candidates do not complete student teaching successfully.

As you can tell, screening of education students occurs throughout the program and is not based on one or two standardized tests such as ACT or GRE scores. What is evident related to our process is that admission and continuation in our program is not a onetime process, but a continuous and rigorous review throughout the students program. Based on the figures provided above about 30 to 35 percent of those aspiring to be teachers who initially desire to become teachers are not successful. It would seem to me that our process is not only rigorous, but somewhat daunting for those who aspire to become teachers.

The clinical component of our teacher education program has been dramatically changed in the past five years. The College has hired three individuals to focus on the formal supervision of students in the pre-student teaching experiences. These clinical faculty formally observe and provide feedback to students in the pre-student teaching experiences. This feedback is used as part of the Phase 2 admission review.

Additionally, we have significantly increased our pre-student teacher experiences in classrooms. In elementary education our college was the first in the state to embrace the professional development school model. We started in 1996 at Hermosa Heights elementary school, and now have four other locations in Las Cruces and Gadsden. NMSU elementary majors are required to experience two full semesters in schools working with teachers at least 20 hours per week. These additional experiences have significantly impacted the future teachers skill set in classroom management. While in the school setting elementary majors from NMSU use the Pearson Reading Street program as modeled by LSCPS teachers. Our elementary teachers have extensive practical experience using this scientifically-based reading program besides the academic course work provided by faculty.

Furthermore, our secondary education program has increased requirements in early pre-student teaching experiences. The formal supervision by the college in the pre-student teaching experiences has had a considerable impact on our candidates' growth and understanding of the teaching learning experience.

Similar to our admission process our clinical experiences are integrated throughout the program and supervision occurs throughout the program. Students' classroom experiences are reviewed and evaluated at different stages in the program to determine progress and professional development. The student teaching part of the experience is very important but is not the only place where candidates' classroom performance is evaluated. Supervision of and review of student performance in the classroom continues throughout the program. When faculty and supervising teachers determine that a student's performance is not acceptable,

appropriate steps are taken to remediate or if necessary counsel the candidate out of the teacher education program.

A teacher's knowledge of content is important to their success as a teacher. At NMSU a future high school teacher will have between 45-50 hours of credits in their teaching discipline. For example, a future science teacher graduating from NMSU could have a range of 48-55 credits in science depending on their area of concentration. In addition, each candidate must pass a test in their teaching field prior to admission to student teaching.

Over the past twenty years our college has completed surveys with principals who hire our graduates. The last three surveys included 120 principals and 91% of the principals surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied with the overall preparation of our candidates. The areas of strength of our graduates as identified by principals are, teaching skills, content knowledge (knowledge in Science, Math,...), working with diverse learners, and working with other teachers. Areas where we need to improve include, classroom management, working with children with special needs, working with parents and using national tests to assist in improving instruction.

We have also conducted surveys from our graduates who had been teaching for at least three years. These surveys have been collected every two or three years during the past 20 years. The last three surveys included over 200 graduates and 92 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with their overall preparation in their teacher education program. The findings for areas of improvement and preparation were very similar to that of principals, with classroom management and working with student with special needs and parents as key areas for future program improvement.

Cooperating teachers or mentor teachers were also surveyed about the student teachers that were in their classrooms. Over 100 cooperating teachers responded and 94% were satisfied or very satisfied with our candidates' performance.

Our college is reviewing strategies for our next steps and in the near future we will be announcing major changes in our program design to address needed areas of improvement. We began planning over a year ago and will continue through this year. The major change will be to implement a five-year graduate licensure program. This means that every NMSU candidate in teacher education will have a bachelor degree prior to being admitted to our teacher education licensure program. This program change will allow our students to increase their course work in their content area such as English and Science and permit us to integrate more Special Education and Bilingual/TESOL education. Several new program changes will be implemented once the program is finalized. We plan to offer an elementary program that will have a combined Mathematics and Science focus as teaching fields.

Besides the traditional educational program changes on the horizon we have integrated innovative programs with our science and math partners such as the Robert Noyce Scholarship Program which provides substantial stipends to the students interested in becoming Math and

Science teachers. This program is funded by the National Science Foundation. At the undergraduate level, we have instituted an approved program by PED that allows undergraduate Science and Mathematics majors completing a bachelor degree to begin an undergraduate teacher education program. Completion of the license occurs at the graduate level. We have 13 students in the program at this time.

At the graduate level we have a program in collaboration with the Department of Mathematics to prepare Math instructional leaders in the schools. We are on our second cohort of teachers after graduating 30 math educational instructional leaders last year. This program incorporates mathematics and instructional process in an integrated approach thus increasing math knowledge and instructional skills. Professors in Mathematics and Education have worked together to develop and implement this program.

Related to the NCTQ study, I mentioned that I was dismayed by the assertions because their findings seem to be a disconnected with the U.S News and World Report on our graduate programs. During the last five years, their reviews of NMSU's College of Education graduate programs indicate rankings from 103 to 130 out of 1200 graduate programs throughout the nation. Based on U.S News and World report, we have the highest ranking of any College at NMSU for graduate programs and have maintained this position for the past four years.

The process of preparing a teacher is a very complex and important task. Our college, faculty, administration and staff understand the importance of this responsibility. It is an honor to work with future and present educators. They are some of the most dedicated and caring people in our society and often provide at great personal sacrifice educational opportunities for the children of this state and country. NMSU takes great pride in our programs and our graduates. We certainly do not believe that the report released by NCTQ depicts a true picture of our program successes nor does it represent the quality of our students or graduates.

II. “Quality of our Graduates” – Letter
from Jane Gurnea, Las Cruces Public
Schools, Beginning Teacher Induction
Program

June 26, 2013

Jane E. Gurnea
Las Cruces Public Schools
Beginning Teacher Induction Program
Human Resource Development/ Professional Development Center
505 S. Main, Suite 400
Las Cruces, NM 88001
Office: 575-527-6054

Dear Dean Morehead,

I have recently reviewed the "Teacher Prep Review 2013 Report" published by the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ). I always read reports such as this with great interest. However, I was dismayed to discover this report condemned the entire state of New Mexico through sweeping, generalized statements without recognizing the efforts our state and its individual institutions are making as they continue to evolve to better meet the needs of our preservice teachers and their future students. I feel compelled to address some of the concerns raised in this report as they pertain to New Mexico and New Mexico State University (NMSU). I have served as an educator with Las Cruces Public Schools (LCPS) since 1981. During that time I have been a classroom teacher, Cooperating Teacher for Student Teachers, and a mentor for novice educators. Since 1999, I have worked with the LCPS Beginning Teacher Induction Program. I have also served in the capacity of co-chair for the NMSU/LCPS Professional Development Schools (PDS) committee. I feel these diverse experiences have provided me with a deep understanding of the NMSU Teacher Preparation program.

One of the issues raised in this report concerns admission status. While I do not personally deal with the students admitted to the teacher preparation program at NMSU, I most definitely deal with them upon graduation. More than seventy percent of the LCPS new teachers hired each year since 1999 have been NMSU graduates. As the second largest school district in New Mexico, LCPS always has a wealth of candidates and a broad pool of applicants for our teaching positions. As I have worked as a district mentor with the novice educators through our LCPS Beginning Teacher Induction program, I have noted the following:

- The vast majority of these new graduates have an eagerness to continue to learn and improve their teaching skills as they enter this career
- The majority of these new graduates are hired possessing an understanding of lesson planning, standards-based instruction, and a familiarity with scientifically-based reading instruction gained through both coursework and classroom field experiences
- The LCPS Beginning Teacher Induction Program is able to successfully build upon the knowledge and experiences the majority of these new NMSU graduates bring to their classrooms in a natural progression of skill development and scaffolding of new experiences as they transition into career educators

Over seventy-five percent of the teachers hired by LCPS since 1999 are still teaching somewhere. Over sixty-eight percent are still teaching with LCPS. These statistics are well above the national norm. Without a solid undergraduate foundation, I do not believe our retention statistics would be so high.

The area of Elementary Reading is always one of concern and controversy. I was not surprised to see it addressed in this report. However, I could not find evidence in this report of changes or progress made by New Mexico universities during the last decade. I have observed first hand as Reading Instruction at NMSU has continued to evolve. New faculty have been hired with Reading endorsements and demonstrated strengths in the teaching of reading. My school district only utilizes scientifically-based reading curriculum. As NMSU students are placed in our district classrooms for multiple semesters, they learn to utilize the curriculum effectively while being mentored by competent Level II and Level III classroom teachers. This creates a foundation which I can then build upon when graduates are hired and enter the LCPS Beginning Teacher Induction Program. I felt this report was lacking in valid data which we in New Mexico are poised to gather. I will be far more interested to view the results of the new Reading NMTA currently being administered to prospective New Mexico teachers. I certainly hope the NMPED disaggregates this data to tell us the following:

- The percentage of teachers who pass the reading NMTA on the first try
- The number of teachers from each NM university who take this NMTA
- The test items which are most successfully answered (with a breakdown by university)
- The test items which are missed most often (again with a breakdown by university)

In my opinion, this concrete data would be a far more authentic means of driving university instruction. It would be more useful for New Mexico universities to be able to distinguish where they are currently successful in Reading instruction and identify the specific areas for growth improvement than to rely upon the NCTQ report which simply condemns all New Mexico universities as “unsuccessful”.

I was especially appalled by the general condemnation of the Student Teacher placements described in this report. As a co-chair of the LCPS/NMSU Professional Development Schools committee (PDS), I have become more directly involved each year with all preservice student placements in LCPS classrooms. As a committee with over fifty active members, we have combined the efforts of district and university personnel to address concerns regarding the equity, diversity, and authenticity of preservice placements. We have developed protocols which include the following:

- Each school must have a current, complete PDS Accountability and Commitment plan on file before any NMSU students are placed at their site
- This plan dictates the equity of experiences each NMSU student will have regardless of the placement site
- We place students at different sites with different Level II or Level III teachers, different grade levels or content areas each semester. The goal is to provide diversity of preservice experience for NMSU students while equitably utilizing the school sites and classrooms of LCPS
- LCPS/MSU PDS implemented a Cooperating Teacher Application form during the 2012-2013 school year modeled after the LCPS site-based mentor application form. (See below)
- Before placing student teachers, we now have the following steps:
 - A completed Cooperating Teacher Application form (Level II or Level III only / MA required for SpEd placements)

- Site Administrator approval
- Joint approval from NMSU staff and LCPS Human Resource Development staff
- Any placement changes made during the semester must include conversations with these same staff members
- As LCPS implements the Common Core State Standards K-12 and the new NM Teacher Evaluation System 2013-2014, all information, pacing guides, lesson plan templates, etc. will continue to be shared with NMSU as we continue to collaborate to provide an effective, authentic field experience for preservice students and future teachers

Again, the NCTQ report condemned all student teacher placements without investigating the steps universities such as NMSU have been taking to improve communication and integrate the efforts of local school districts such as LCPS.

As a New Mexico educator for the last thirty-two years, a mentor for novice teachers for fourteen years and the parent of a new Level I teacher, I have learned to recognize that education exists upon a learning continuum. Reports and data which help institutions to make progress and move forward along this continuum are productive and can definitely serve a useful purpose. However, those reports which utilize general statements to condemn institutions without highlighting specific strengths or directions for growth cause us all to stall or even move backwards as we attempt to make sense of what was stated. It is my sincere hope that New Mexico and NMSU views this NCTQ report only as an impetus to continue to grow and improve. I feel progress IS being achieved and I am dismayed that this report was not able to highlight such areas as improved NMTA data, increasing university and school district collaborations for preservice field experiences, or the impact of a solid university foundation upon the success of the three-tiered NM teacher licensure system.

I look forward to continuing our work together as NMSU and LCPS continue to collaborate to provide strategic instruction and quality field placements for effective future educators.

Sincerely,

Jane E. Gurnea

Jane E. Gurnea
Las Cruces Public Schools
Beginning Teacher Induction Program
Human Resource Development/ Professional Development Center



**Las Cruces Public Schools
Cooperating Teacher Application**

This document is to be signed and completed by both the building administrator and the Cooperating Teacher Applicant.

Administrator:

I approve _____, a Level II or Level III **self-contained** classroom teacher to work as a Cooperating teacher for the _____ semester.

I have reviewed the application below and agree this teacher will meet the requirements for this assignment.

Administrator Signature _____ Date: _____

Cooperating Teacher Applicant:

I am a Level II or Level III classroom teacher _____

I agree to work with a student teacher (ST) from _____ (University) for the _____ semester.

My License and endorsement areas include: _____ I am teaching grade(s)/Content areas: _____

Please answer YES or NO:

- _____ I am willing to serve as a Cooperating Teacher for this semester
- _____ I have been teaching this grade level at least one full year
- _____ I teach in my own, self-contained classroom.
- _____ I will be completing my LCPS contract for this semester (without extended leave)
- _____ I am not on a district growth plan
- _____ I will work with my site-based PDS committee
- _____ I agree to notify parents that a Student Teacher will be working with their children
- _____ I agree to provide timely, documented ST feedback using journals and observation forms
- _____ I am a good listener and will utilize effective communication skills
- _____ I am familiar with the Common Core State Standards /NM Standards and Benchmarks
- _____ I am familiar with the 9 NM teaching competencies
- _____ I will facilitate observations by my Student Teacher (ST) to include IEP meetings, Sat, LAT, Title I, Bilingual, etc.
- _____ I will stay on site during lead teaching while remaining available to assist the ST as needed
- _____ I understand my ST will shadow me for all duties and meetings
- _____ I understand my ST will never "cover" another classroom
- _____ I agree my ST will not be required to stay longer than 1 hour after school each day
- _____ I understand the ST may agree to attend any evening function such as Literacy Night, Science Fair, SAC, PTO, etc.
- _____ I am familiar with the NM Code of ethics

As a cooperating teacher (CT), I also agree to the following:

_____ I will attend the mandatory Cooperating Teacher Training sessions scheduled with NMSU and/or LCPS during this semester. My ST will cover my classroom for a short time with a contact teacher overseeing. CT Mtg. dates: **Elementary:** _____ **Secondary:** _____

_____ I will work with the university supervisor and complete all university requirements in a timely fashion

Cooperating Teacher Signature _____ Date: _____

Return to the LCPS PDC by : _____

Preliminary assignment with the following Student Teacher:

Both LCPS and the University partner reserve the right to change ST assignments during the semester

NMSU initial _____ LCPS HRD/PDC Initial _____

III. Letters from NMSU Students

- Jessica Adams
- Blanca Ortega
- Laura Talley

July 1, 2013

Dr. Michael Morehead – Dean of College of Education
New Mexico State University

Dear Dr. Morehead,

As a recent graduate from New Mexico State University, I am more than proud to acknowledge my affiliation and relationship with this university. My time spent in the Secondary Education Program has prepared me to take on the role as an educator by challenging me academically, supplying me with numerous resources, and providing an effective structure that fostered a powerful student teaching experience. It has been so effective in fact, that I will continue attending NMSU to obtain my MA Degree in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

From my first semester as a freshman enrolled in the College of Education, I have been guided down the rigorous path to graduate as an educator. While as a freshman I may have missed the merits of the structure within the Secondary Education Program, I now recognize and value this framework. From the beginning we had exposure and experience in the classroom in a variety of settings (i.e. elementary, middle, and high school). These experiences allowed us to be certain early on of the path on which we were headed. With the more in-depth and challenging experience of practicum, in which we were placed one-on-one with a teacher for a set amount of hours, we as undergrad were allowed to experience the ongoing environment of the classroom, learn from our elder educators, and given the opportunity to teach. These practicums were monitored and observed by our Professors from NMSU, which always provided assessment, feedback, and improvements to better ourselves as teachers. We were able to harness all of our experiences through discussion with our fellow peers and professors at NMSU, allowing us to solve real problems ourselves with the wisdom of experience from our professors.

With student teaching being such a crucial and influential final segment of an educator's degree, NMSU rose to the challenge to prepare us for that final step. By submitting, and being accepted into, the TEP (Teacher Education Program) and the STEP (Student Teaching Education Program), we fleshed out our first Letters of Intent and Teaching Philosophy Statements, showed off our NMTA test scores, and displayed our recommendations from cooperating teachers we worked alongside. We demonstrated ourselves in a way very similar to how we would present ourselves in job interviews just a few years down the road. These processes were challenging and took time, but they demonstrate the University's dedication to diligence and excellence. We as undergrad knew that becoming an educator was a serious endeavor, and I can testify that we all felt prepared by NMSU for that calling.

With these processes in place and our acceptance into them, the transition to Student Teaching was made almost effortlessly. NMSU worked diligently to find every student a placement within LCPS and GISD districts and with a compatible teacher and subject. NMSU set in a place qualifications and requirements for our cooperating teachers, ensuring us high quality educators. From my experience, I was able to be placed with a teacher who was very involved in the transition to Common Core, taught Creative Writing, and taught both Honors and regular Language Arts classes – all things I am interested in. This gave me not only the rigor that comes from teaching multiple classes, but also paired me with a tenacious teacher willing to put in the work for excellent classes. I was paired with a teacher with much my same temperament,

work ethic, and passion for educating students. And from the experiences of my fellow peers, I know we all had similar positive and meaningful student teaching experiences.

All in all, my time spent in the Secondary Education Program at NMSU has been a beautiful, challenging, and motivating experience. Attending classes with my core group of peers taught me how to work with other educators to solve our problems and encourage one another. Having enthusiastic and hard-working professors pushed me to succeed academically and intellectually. And being integrated into the classroom from the very beginning established my confidence to be in the classroom and the atmosphere to richly glean all I could. But more importantly, I think emerging from NMSU I feel immensely *cared* for by my college – and I don't think many graduates can attest to that. I truly feel that the College of Education wanted me to succeed, went the distance to make sure I was prepared as an educator, and gave me a framework that gave me the safety I needed and the space to fail and succeed. I am proud to say I am an NMSU alumni and am choosing NMSU as the University for my MA because I have seen the learning environment they can foster and what amazing educators they can produce. I want to be in an environment that is going to both nourish and push me to excel as an educator. I believe that is what they have been doing – and will continue to do – at New Mexico State University.

Sincerely,

Jessica Adams

June 27, 2013

Dean Morehead and NMSU College of Education,

I would like to first start off by saying, thank you for all of the support and time you all have put into not only my career, but of many other aspiring teachers. I started my college career not knowing what field it was I wanted to go into and education was the last thing on my mind. I saw my sister, NMSU alumni as well, reading books on secondary education, writing papers and talking about how challenging becoming a teacher really was. Since I am one to take on challenges, I decided to declare my major in secondary Spanish education. I am very glad I did. As soon as I sat down with my advisor I knew that I had picked the correct college and that I was going to receive all the help and guidance I needed in order to succeed in the teaching world.

All the knowledge I have gained during my time in NMSU and in the College of Education, not only prepared me for the teaching world, but opened my eyes as to how important a teacher really is. During my student teaching I faced a few challenges with the parents of my students and feared that all my hard work would go to waste. Thankfully I had the support from my cooperating teacher, NMSU supervisor and of Dr. Jamie Baker. For that I am very thankful. They supported me and provided me with the tools necessary to overcome the situation and how to go about similar situations once I stepped into the actual teaching world.

I have other family members in NMSU all going for different careers and what I hear them say about their respective college, advisors and professors in such a way that makes me feel even more thankful and blessed to have had the opportunity to be part of the College of Education environment. Not many college graduates can say that their professors or former teachers still cared enough to take them into consideration after graduation. I am one of the few that is able to say and vouch for such considerations. A perfect example of this is when I opened my NMSU email to go through my emails and saw an email from Dr. Jamie Baker advising me of a Spanish position in a charter school up in Albuquerque. By this point I had already accepted a position in Grants High School in New Mexico. There are no words to describe the actions and the time my teachers took in order to help me succeed as an educator post-graduation.

I am very happy to say that because of my wonderful experience in the College of Education in NMSU, I have decided to pursue my masters with the same department. I have no doubt that this new journey I will embark in at NMSU will be a very pleasurable one.

Once again, thank you for everything you have done.

Blanca Ortega

July 1, 2013

Dr. Michael Morehead
NMSU
College of Education
P.O. Box 30001
Las Cruces, NM 88003

Dear Dr. Morehead,

I recently graduated from NMSU with a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction in May and just accepted my first teaching position with Las Cruces Public Schools last week. I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you and your faculty within the College of Education for giving me the confidence and skills needed to take on this new and exciting challenge. I believe that the program has prepared me well too overcome many of the obstacles that a first-year teacher faces by setting high standards, teaching me how to be self reflective, and by carefully selecting a mentor teacher that is highly effective in the classroom.

The faculty within the Curriculum and Instruction department set high standards and expected us to rise to meet those standards. In classes such as Explorations in Education and Multicultural Education we were required to read many complex texts and be prepared weekly to engage in intellectual dialogue that would ultimately shape the way that we as secondary educators interact with diverse youth.

Throughout the program the faculty required that we reflect often on our development as an educator by completing the teacher candidate dispositions. These disposition assessments allowed us to assess our own growth as a professional educator and served as an opportunity for the faculty/mentor to discuss future goals. We were also asked to reflect and self-assess every time that we taught in front of a classroom to our peers, during our practicum assignments, or during student teaching. As a result of having to submit and discuss my teaching experiences with faculty/mentors I have become a teacher that is able to self-assess, adapt, and do whatever it takes to help students achieve.

The Secondary Education Department worked diligently to select a mentor teacher as well as a university supervisor for my student teaching experience who both had demonstrated themselves effective teaching. These mentors were able to come alongside and support me as I transitioned into teaching and continue to be available as resources as I begin my first year as a teacher.

I would also like to thank you and your faculty for continuing to be available for guidance post-graduation specifically Dr. Jamie Baker, Dr. H.P Baptiste, and Dr. Cecilia Hernandez.

Sincerely,

Laura Talley
Teacher
Centennial High School
Las Cruces, NM
(214) 597-0923

IV. Summary of National Discourse on the
2013 NCTQ Teacher Prep Review
- Dr. Ron Dziwenka, Program Manager of
Assessment, College of Education, NMSU

Summary of National Discourse on the 2013 NCTQ Teacher Prep Review

There are at least one hundred and fifty national articles and studies that have criticized the 2013 NCTQ Teacher Prep Review. No research university or organization, including the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, has ever endorsed NCTQ's methodology, nor has this study been replicated by independent researchers. It focuses almost exclusively on inputs and lacks any consideration of outputs. Basing its assessment on a review of course syllabi and other descriptive information neither provides sufficient validation of key process and outcome information nor provides evidence of sufficient breadth or depth for meaningful analyses. The methodology did not include visiting programs or interviewing students or schools that hired graduates, but collected all its data merely from admission requirements, course syllabi, textbooks and graduate surveys. The indicators used to measure the criteria often fail to identify the aspects of practice that are most important or the actual outcomes that programs achieve. Fewer than 1% of programs in the country “fully cooperated” with the study. Only about 10 percent of the programs that were rated actually provided NCTQ with the requested data, and there is no explanation of how institutions that did not provide data were treated. The ratings are based on partial and often inaccurate data. In addition, NCTQ has refused to share with the institutions it was rating, or anyone else, the scoring rubrics used to determine how many stars each program would receive in each of the categories reviewed. NCTQ also ignores the increasing relevance of alternative providers of teachers. This exclusion calls into question the intent of the NCTQ effort.

This report is a synopsis of the main criticisms of the 2013 NCTQ Teacher Prep Review, its yearly report on Teacher Education Programs (TEPs), by national education organizations, leading scholars/academics in the field of education, Deans of colleges with TEPs and newspapers. Included also are selected articles by leading education scholars that have responded to the report.

.....

Scholars / Academics

“One of the two most important criticisms of the NCTQ effort is the almost unilateral focus on inputs and the lack of any consideration of outputs.... **What is terribly troubling, however, is that NCTQ makes the quantum leap from inputs to quality preparation.** Essentially, NCTQ claims it can assess the quality of a preparation programs’ teachers based almost solely on a review of syllabi in some, but not all, courses taken by students in a program.”

“The second major critique of the NCTQ effort is that there is little or no empirical research that substantiates the use of such standards in an effort to evaluate and judge the quality of a teacher preparation program... **NCTQ... completely mis-uses the research by contending EVERY program MUST use a certain strategy.**“

“NCTQ also ignores the increasing relevance of alternative providers of teachers... **the President of NCTQ believes that many of the alternative certification programs are “awful,” but these programs are excluded from the analysis. Why exclude some of the worst programs in the country...** This exclusion calls into question the intent of the NCTQ effort.”

“What will be the ultimate impact of the NCTQ rankings? First, if programs pay attention to the rankings... programs will start to game the system. By game the system, I mean faculty will begin to write syllabi that conforms to NCTQ standards. That doesn't mean the actual instruction in courses will align with the standards... Second, there will be increased pressure to close down or restrict university-based teacher preparation programs and provide more opportunity for alternative preparation programs, including privately managed programs.... **Ultimately, I think NCTQ and some other organizations simply want to de-regulate and privatize teacher preparation in the belief such actions will improve teacher quality.**”

["NCTQ Ranking of Teacher Prep Programs Gets an F"](#) - by **Ed Fuller**, Associate Professor of Education Policy at Penn State University. June 17, 2013.

.....

“NCTQ’s methodology is a paper review of published course requirements and course syllabi against a check list that does not consider the actual quality of instruction that the programs offer, evidence of what their students learn, or whether graduates can actually teach.... (NCTQ’s website indicated that fewer than 1% of programs in the country “fully cooperated” with the study.) NCTQ collected documents through websites and public records requests. The ratings published in this report are, thus, based on partial and often inaccurate data, and fail to evaluate teacher education quality.”

“In this study, the highest-achieving states on the National Assessment of Educational Progress — including Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, New Jersey, and Minnesota — all got grades of C or D, while low-achieving Alabama got the top rating from NCTQ. It is difficult to trust ratings that are based on criteria showing no relationship to successful teaching and learning.... [T]he indicators used to measure the criteria often fail to identify the aspects of practice that are most important or the actual outcomes that programs achieve.... the degree of inaccuracy in the data is shocking.”

“[W]hile NCTQ focuses on paper requirements for *inputs*, California has moved toward accountability based on stronger evidence of *outcomes*, including rigorous tests of basic skills, content knowledge, and pedagogy.”

“Accurate, well-vetted information on course requirements and syllabi, plus extensive data on actual candidate qualifications, evaluations of program quality, employers’ assessments of candidates’ readiness, and graduates’ performance in classrooms are available through state and national accreditation records, as well as in-depth studies conducted by researchers... Without reliable data related to what programs and their candidates actually do, the study is not useful for driving improvement.”

["Why the NCTQ teacher prep ratings are nonsense"](#) *The Washington Post* - Linda Darling-Hammond, Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Teaching and Teacher Education, Stanford University. June 18, 2013.

.....

“NCTQ is not a professional association. It did not make site visits.... Not only is it not a professional association. It lacks independence. It has an agenda. NCTQ was founded by the conservative Thomas B. Fordham Foundation in 2000¹ with the explicit purpose of harassing institutions of teacher education and urging alternative arrangements. I was on the board of TBF at the time.”

“NCTQ boasts of its regard for teachers but its review of the nation’s teacher-training institutions says nothing about faculty. They don’t matter. They are irrelevant. All that matters is what is in the course [syllabi and] catalog.”

“I certainly agree that some such institutions are weak and inadequate, though I don’t think NCTQ’s superficial methodology identifies them. I also agree with the report’s recommendation that teacher education institutions should have higher standards for admission. But I don’t agree that the mark of a great education school is how many courses it offers on the Common Core standards or how attentive it is to raising test scores.”

["That NCTQ Report on Teacher Education: F"](#) - Diane Ravitch, Professor, New York University. June 18, 2013.

.....

“The NCTQ indicators of these standards do not provide an accurate picture of the candidates actually prepared or the opportunities actually offered by these programs, and they provide no information about the outcomes of programs — what candidates actually learn and can do. In addition, based on the inaccuracies that are surfacing for most programs, the data collection was obviously conducted very poorly. It is truly unfortunate for the field of research and the field of teacher education that the development of the data collection were done with so little concern for accuracy. And it is a shame that NCTQ and U.S. News and World Report would publish ratings

¹ Conservatives, and I was one, did not like teacher training institutions. We thought they were too touchy-feely, too concerned about self-esteem and social justice and not concerned enough with basic skills and academics. In 1997, we had commissioned a Public Agenda study called “Different Drummers”; this study chided professors of education because they didn’t care much about discipline and safety and were more concerned with how children learn rather than what they learned. TBF established NCTQ as a new entity to promote alternative certification and to break the power of the hated ed schools. For a time, it was not clear how this fledgling organization would make waves or if it would survive. But in late 2001, Secretary of Education Rod Paige gave NCTQ a grant of \$5 million to start a national teacher certification program called the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (see p. 16 of the link). ABCTE has since become an online teacher preparation program, where someone can become a teacher for \$1995.00. Ravitch, Diane. *What is NCTQ?* (<http://dianeravitch.net/2012/05/23/what-is-nctq/>) - retrieved 6/25/13)

without even checking the data.... But there is no published plan to correct the ratings, and I fear that programs may have too little confidence in the NCTQ methods to take steps to engage with them further.”

"Problems with new rating of teacher colleges, point by point" *The Washington Post* - **Linda Darling-Hammond**, Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Teaching and Teacher Education, Stanford University. June 20, 2013.

.....

NCTQ is not an impartial arbiter of quality for teacher preparation and, in fact, has a documented bias against higher education-based teacher preparation programs.

NCTQ’s standards and methodology have changed multiple times in recent years, including during the course of a single review. These shifts discredit the reliability of NCTQ’s standards and methodology for use in judging any programs.

The 2013 national review of education schools is based on a review of documents with such inconsistent participation and fragmented inputs that it would not be published by a credible, professional research organization.

NCTQ’s work is part of an extensive, well-funded public relations campaign against higher education-based teacher preparation. It does not seek to improve teacher preparation, nor is it a helpful or reliable guide for parents, prospective teacher candidates and the public.

NCTQ’s ratings of preparation programs and state policies often run counter to states’ documented performance of students on the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

NCTQ’s past reports have contained significant inaccuracies that were never corrected, and findings have often been inconsistent with the actual work under way in states and programs.

NCTQ employed tactics of intimidation and subterfuge to obtain materials for the national review of education schools.

In the 2013 review, NCTQ’s claims that it is difficult to get teacher preparation to change and that the profession does not believe it is responsible for training teachers are false and unsubstantiated.

AACTE Members’ Key Points on the National Council on Teacher Quality’s 2013 Teacher Prep Review (June 20, 2013, <http://aacte.org/resources/nctq-usnwr-review/aacte-members-key-points-on-2013-nctq-review.html>, accessed 6/25/13)

.....

College of Education Deans

“While the [2013 NCTQ] report overreached in its attempt to rate individual programs because of thin data, in aggregate it presented a deeply disturbing picture of teacher preparation in the United States.... [And,] a number of institutions have substantially strengthened and sometimes transformed their programs, more than the NCTQ report acknowledges.”

Fixing how we train U.S. teachers – Arthur Levine, June 21, 2013, hechingerreport.org

“I don’t trust the methodology” NCTQ used, Levine said, since the data were incomplete and focused on documents rather than observing classrooms or teacher candidates. Leaders of teacher preparation programs complained that the review relied almost entirely on syllabuses, course descriptions and other “inputs” rather than “outputs.”

Teacher Ed Takedown – Lauren Ingeno, June 18, 2013, Inside Higher Ed

(Arthur Levine is president of the Woodrow Wilson Foundation. Previously, he served as president and professor of education at Teachers College, Columbia University)

.....

“NCTQ’s methodology has been criticized by numerous experts and education groups, including the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. Thirty-five chief academic officers from the education schools of the Association of American Universities and chancellors of the California State University System, the University System of Maryland and the State University System of New York, among others, have written to NCTQ and U.S. News & World Report expressing their concerns.”

“NCTQ is an advocacy organization, not a research organization... No research university or organization has ever endorsed NCTQ’s methodology, nor can their studies be replicated by independent researchers.”

[IU School of Education response to NCTQ Teacher Prep Review](#) - Gerardo M. Gonzalez, Dean, Indiana University School of Education. June 18, 2013.

.....

“NCTQ did not invite institutions to participate, but instead forced them to by utilizing lawsuits and Freedom of Information Act requests to gain access to the materials at public colleges and universities that refused to provide them voluntarily.... [There is] the perception that NCTQ, largely because of funding it has received from some foundations deemed to be politically conservative, has a particular agenda it is pursuing. That agenda is to shut down traditional teacher preparation programs in favor of alternative certification programs.”

“The methodology used by NCTQ... I agree with many others is seriously flawed. Not only is the focus on reviewing syllabi and other teaching materials a poor way to assess program

quality... but the organization has refused to share with the institutions it was rating or anyone else the scoring rubrics used to determine how many stars each program would receive in each of the categories reviewed.... [I]t was difficult to determine how we ended up with two stars, given the absence of any details on the scoring rubric used. But from the comments provided, we were able to determine that NCTQ made factual errors in their review of our two programs. It is impossible to tell whether changing this information would result in a change to our overall rating. ”

[The Skinny on the NCTQ Teacher Prep Review](#) - Donald Heller, Dean, Michigan State University. June 19, 2013.

.....

“NCTQ’s own managing director has suggested to me the group has no evidence their standards will produce any particular results, which is why a large number of my peers at Association of American Universities (AAU) schools of Education have written persuasively about this flawed methodology.”

“NCTQ didn’t visit with students, ask employers about the quality of those they hire or gather any sort of impact data to substantiate their claims,” Ginsberg said. “Instead, they created some standards and somehow decided how each institution did or did not meet their requirements. If this were a research paper produced by a student, it would get a failing grade. To use this as a means of rating institutions is ridiculous.”

“[R]elying on results from an organization whose leaders begin with their conclusions, where no testing of their solutions was done to assure they have it right, is both wrong and potentially damaging to the nation’s teaching force and students. We at the University of Kansas wholeheartedly agree with the National Council on Teacher Quality that we should be producing the best possible teachers for our nation’s schools... However, this report will likely do more harm than good in pursuing that goal.”

“Interestingly, when comparing NCTQ’s highest-rated states (B-) versus their lowest-rated states (F) on the results of the national report card — the National Assessment of Educational Progress 4th and 8th grade Reading and Mathematics scores — the results showed that the average of the lowest-rated states was higher than the highest-rated states on all tests except for one. And... NCTQ’s lower-rated states were above the national average score on three of the four tests, while their higher-rated states were below the national average on three of the four.”

["Dean disputes methodology in state-by-state analysis of teacher preparation"](#) - Rick Ginsberg, Dean, University of Kansas. June 18, 2013.

.....

“NCTQ was founded in 2000 by the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation. Its self-described "sister" organization, the Thomas B. Fordham Institute is a well-known conservative think tank that

regularly promotes school vouchers, privatization and other policies that reflect a clearly partisan slant on public education.”

“NCTQ would not have survived had it not received a \$5 million federal grant to establish "a national teacher certification program called the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence. ABCTE has since become an online teacher preparation program, where someone can become a teacher for \$1,995.... this program is accepted for teacher licensure in only eight states...”

“Not only did NCTQ develop its own criteria for reviewing teacher education programs — criteria that have little, if any, relationship to the real world quality of program graduates — but it also used the bully strategy of demanding that deans and directors of programs produce, at their own considerable expense, the documents NCTQ requested or be evaluated anyway.”

“[T]he methods NCTQ used to acquire documents are borderline unethical. For example, in ads posted in college newspapers and on the NCTQ "Right to Know" website, it offered college students "stipends of \$25 to \$200 for the materials we need" (e.g., course syllabi and evaluation forms) without requiring the students to inform or get permission from the professors or programs...”

"Group Rating Teacher Preparation Deserves Close Scrutiny" *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* - **Melanie Agnew**, Dean, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater; **Stewart Purkey**, director of teacher education, Lawrence University; and **Jeanne Williams**, professor, Ripon College. June 7, 2013.

.....

Editorials

“I’m having a hard time understanding how you can judge this institution’s education programs when the only thing you have ever asked me for is syllabi,” said LaTisha Smith, dean of Harris-Stowe State University said. “That’s like my saying can you send me five pictures of your kids and maybe some awards they’ve won and I’ll make all sorts of judgments about your family, without ever talking to them or talking to your neighbors. I’m still taken aback by this process.” - **St. Louis Beacon**. June 18, 2013.

.....

“[T]he [NCTQ] investigators requested tomes of information from education programs, such as admission requirements, course syllabi, textbooks and graduate surveys. They did not visit programs or interview students or schools that hired graduates, one of the persistent criticisms of the review.”

Report: Too many teachers, too little quality - June 18, 2013, **Associated Press**

.....

“We are also concerned that NCTQ has chosen to rate only university-based programs, and is not providing the same level of scrutiny to the numerous alternative teacher certification programs that have been created around the country.... As in any profession, a critical component of teacher education is the internship in which teacher candidates engage. Yet it appears that the NCTQ review includes little, if anything at all, to assess the quality and most importantly, the outcomes, from each program’s internship placements....

Statement on NCTQ Teacher Prep Review - June 17, 2013 (<http://edwp.educ.msu.edu>)

.....

“In its Guide to Ratings methodologies, NCTQ frequently couches its rationale with nuances such as “While there is no research basis for this ...” or “While there is no research evidence ...” Rather than providing evidence, the rationale NCTQ provides for many standards appears to be opinion-based and, in some cases, the rationale includes broad generalizations that many experts would recognize as untrue.”

"Teacher-school ratings aren't the last word" - [Carine Feyten](#), Dean, Miami University. June 19, 2013.

.....

NCTQ evaluates inputs in order to draw conclusions regarding the quality of teacher preparation program outputs.

The list of inputs NCTQ used to evaluate teacher preparation programs is incomplete.

The majority of NCTQ’s standards are not evidence-based, and appear to reflect the specific viewpoint of NCTQ.

It is unclear how well the evidence that NCTQ uses to measure a program’s adherence with each standard actually measures each standard.

A Review and Critique of the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) Methodology to Rate Schools of Education - [Eduventures](#). June 18, 2013.

.....

Selected Articles

NCTQ Ranking of Teacher Prep Programs Gets an F

Ed Fuller, Associate Professor of Education Policy at Penn State *Posted on June 17, 2013*

<http://fullerlook.wordpress.com/2013/06/17/nctq-ranking-of-teacher-prep-programs-gets-an-f/>

Background

In January, 2011, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) and *U.S. News & World Report* announced their intention to evaluate and rank teacher [education programs](#) in the United States. The goal of this study is to review the quality of teacher preparation programs across the U.S., based on NCTQ's standards for teacher education. This followed a series of reports assessing state-level Teacher Preparation policies across the nation.

Because there are at least 1,400 university-based teacher preparation programs in the US, NCTQ relied on two methods to assess the practices of teacher preparation programs and the content in the [courses](#) offered by the teacher preparation programs. The first method was to ask preparation program representatives to respond to queries from NCTQ about programs. The second method was to collect and analyze the syllabi from the courses taken by students in teacher preparation programs.

The purpose of this blog is to examine the effort by NCTQ to evaluate, judge, and rank university-based teacher preparation [programs](#). My comments are separated into five sections: (1) Inputs versus outputs; (2) Lack of research foundation; (2) Methodology employed; (3) Alternative programs ignored; (4) Superintendent critiques; and, (5) Ultimate impact.

Approach Focuses on Inputs and Largely Ignores Outputs

One of the two most important criticisms of the NCTQ effort is the almost unilateral focus on [inputs and the lack of any consideration of outputs](#). While inputs are certainly important to a preparation program, the outputs are what matter. By outputs, I mean such outcomes as teacher placement, teacher longevity in the profession, actual behaviors of teachers in the classroom, and the effect of teachers on various student outcomes.

NCTQ claims the barriers to assessing outcomes are simply too large to overcome without the investment of hundreds of millions of dollars. In fact, I would agree with NCTQ on this point—assessing the outcomes of teacher preparation programs would be quite costly and difficult. For example, analyzing outputs such as placement, retention, and impact on student test scores would require states to collect and make available detailed data in a number of areas such as: teacher characteristics and prior experiences; teacher production, placement, and retention; the link between test scores and students; the link between students and their teachers and teachers and their preparation programs; a wide variety of school characteristics; and, the characteristics of the

principal. Most states do not collect such data and, even if they wanted to collect such data, lack the financial and [human resources](#) to accomplish such a huge undertaking. Further, even if states were able to collect such data and NCTQ was granted access to the data, appropriately analyzing such data is extremely difficult and may simply be impossible. Indeed, as Sass and his colleagues found in Florida, fairly comparing teacher preparation programs based on graduates' impact on student test scores is not possible because of the need to control for unobserved characteristics of schools.

Given the extreme difficulty in assessing outcomes, I can understand why NCTQ did not try to assess outcomes. **What is terribly troubling, however, is that NCTQ makes the quantum leap from inputs to quality preparation. Essentially, NCTQ claims it can assess the quality of a preparation programs' teachers based almost solely on a review of syllabi in some, but not all, courses taken by students in a program. There is simply not enough evidence or research to make such a leap (see below for further discussion of this) and NCTQ should have simply stated that they were evaluating and ranking preparation programs on inputs only and left it at that. This is simply another example of a think-tank not understanding issues surrounding research.**

Lack of Research Foundation

The second major critique of the NCTQ effort is that there is little or no empirical research that substantiates the use of such standards in an effort to evaluate and judge the quality of a teacher preparation program. NCTQ admits that their standards are not grounded on a body of research. Note that the "study" lists the number of research reports underlying each standard. Yet, they do not list the papers. Are they peer-reviewed? What was the quality of the research? Was the paper a case study of one program or a large analysis of multiple programs? If NCTQ was really confident and transparent about the research foundation of their standards, they would have listed the papers and even provided links to them. Give me any education topic and I can list 20 papers on that topic. Many won't be pertinent or of high-quality, but it will sure look impressive to the non-researcher that I could say "there are 20 research reports that substantiate this standard." You need both research QUANTITY and QUALITY in order to legitimately adopt a standard.

For example, NCTQ states: "[Our] standards were developed over five years of study and are the result of contributions made by leading thinkers and practitioners from not just all over the nation, but also all over the world. To the extent that we can, we rely on research to guide our standards. However, the field of teacher education is not well-studied." Note that the word researcher is omitted from this description. NCTQ relied on thinkers and practitioners, but not researchers. While thinkers and practitioners can provide useful insight, researchers are critical to such standard setting. In fact, many beliefs based on common sense turn out to be incorrect after research examines and issues.

While NCTQ is correct in that there is not a large body of research examining the inputs of teacher preparation programs and any outcome measures, **there is some research and NCTQ apparently did not read it.** Indeed, [Eduventures](http://www.units.muohio.edu/eap/deansmessge/documents/EduventuresNCTQMethodologyCritique.pdf) (<http://www.units.muohio.edu/eap/deansmessge/documents/EduventuresNCTQMethodologyCritique.pdf>) correctly points out that the NCTQ standards include many inputs for which there is no

research base that links the inputs to any type of output while some inputs that are important indicators of teacher preparation program quality are completely ignored by NCTQ and do not appear in the standards.

Eduventures (2010) notes that important inputs that should be assessed in an effort to link programs to outputs would include: the quality of instruction provided in teacher preparation and content courses, student support services, mentoring and induction provided by the program, and the length of the clinical experience required of students. Note that many of these inputs are simply absent from the NCTQ standards. NCTQ will respond that they don't have enough money to properly conduct the study. So why do the study at all then? Is it okay to do a bad study because the money is not available to conduct a proper study? What would NCTQ say if a teacher preparation program claimed that they could do better if they had more money? I seriously doubt NCTQ would be sympathetic. Why should the public and the media be sympathetic with NCTQ?

Examples of Incorrect Reading of the Research

There are numerous examples of NCTQ standards that are simply not supported by existing research that was clearly available to NCTQ.

For example, NCTQ states that middle and high school preparation programs should require students to obtain a content-area major or at least 30 hours of content courses. Yet, Monk (1994) found diminishing returns to teacher effectiveness past five courses at the high school level. Moreover, at the middle school level, Alexander and Fuller (2003) and Darling-Hammond (personal; communication) found that middle school teachers trained in as elementary teachers were more effective than middle school teachers trained as secondary subject area specialists.

With respect to student teaching, NCTQ requires that preparation programs ensure that cooperating teachers for student teachers be proven effective instructors as measured by student achievement. While this makes common sense, there is no research base to support this contention. Further, NCTQ does not say how districts should use student achievement to assess teacher effectiveness. There is certainly no consensus in this area and there will be great variation in the quality of efforts of districts to do this. Ultimately, the measure is meaningless because there is no method to ensure districts assess teachers in an appropriate and accurate manner.

Also with respect to student teaching, NCTQ states:

When evaluated in the context of teacher preparation programs that are in relative geographic proximity, the proportion of a program's student teaching placements that are made in schools that can be classified as "high functioning and high needs" can signal a commitment to ensuring that all teacher candidates experience teaching in such learning environments. For purposes of classification, schools are designated as "high functioning and high needs" if:

- *Average student performance in reading and mathematics both exceed the district average or the school has been designated by its state as having recently made significant improvements in*

average student performance in reading and mathematics.

AND

- *Forty percent or more of students are eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals.*

Again, this standard has no research foundation. Moreover, it is highly problematic. If districts use percent proficient to determine student performance, then the determination could very well be incorrect. Even more problematic would be the use of the change in percent proficient to assess growth. This almost always provides an inaccurate judgment about progress (Koretz, 2008). This makes me strongly suspect NCTQ does not even understand basic assessment issues.

Another aspect of student teaching that is excluded from the standards is the existence of a capstone project. NCTQ uses the standard of five observations that was found to be statistically significantly associated with teacher practice in a study by Boyd and his colleagues (2008). Yet, the very same study found the existence of a capstone project has the same impact. Why did NCTQ pick one finding and ignore the other?

Perhaps most importantly, the standards for reading/English and mathematics instruction are not grounded in the research that is clearly evident in the standards developed by the National Council of Teachers of English or the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Why NCTQ believes they know more about instruction in these fields than actual experts is beyond me.

Incorrect Use of Research

As is typical with think-tank reports, the authors at NCTQ do not understand how research should be used. There is actually some high-quality research on the link between teacher preparation practices and outcomes, but we certainly need much more to make definitive conclusions about best practice. But using research to identify potential best practices and using research to rank institutions are two totally different uses of research. When researchers like Donald Boyd and his colleagues conduct research, they are looking for patterns in the data to be able to say a certain characteristic of teacher preparation programs is associated with improved teacher practice or greater student achievement. Such research is extremely useful. However, such research does NOT conclude that EVERY teacher preparation that employed a particular strategy was high-performing or that EVERY teacher preparation program that did not use a particular strategy was low-performing. The researchers conclude that teacher preparation programs tend to have better outcomes if they use a particular strategy, but that some programs that use the strategy are low-performing and some that don't use the strategy are high-performing.

NCTQ, however, completely mis-uses the research by contending EVERY program MUST use a certain strategy. That is simply NOT what research says or what researchers would advocate in terms of how the data should be used. There is widespread consensus that research should not be used this way which is why researchers are loath to rank programs. They know that *rankings will be inaccurate* and cause harm to good people who run effective programs and give undue recognition to ineffective programs.

Critique of Methodology

Before critiquing the methodology, I provide a review of the methodology most likely employed in the study. Currently, I cannot find any documentation for the current study.

Methodology Overview

While there is no current description of the methodology NCTQ employed for the 2013 study, we can certainly guess the methodology employed based on their past efforts in this arena. There are three phases to the study.

The first phase includes data collection and consists of two methods. The first method includes reviewing institutional websites to gather information on entrance requirements and other similar information. If syllabi are posted on institutional websites, then the syllabi would be collected from the websites. The second data collection method includes asking schools of education to provide syllabi from teacher preparation courses assuming they are not available on any websites. In addition, a request is made for all course materials and a listing of all readings if these items are not included in the syllabi.

The second phase of the study includes a content analysis of the syllabi as well as ancillary materials and the required readings. NCTQ describes previous data collection efforts in this way:

NCTQ examines institutional admissions standards and a program's own admission policy; general education course requirements and course descriptions; course requirements for secondary teachers in their subject area; professional course requirements and descriptions; syllabi and textbooks for selected coursework; student teaching policies and practices; graduation requirements; course schedules and teaching assignments; faculty listings; and a program's record of interaction with area school districts.

According to NCTQ, the reviewers are experts in the field. In particular, NCTQ makes reference to content experts actually reading all of the required books in a course. *NCTQ states:*

NCTQ never looks at just a syllabus when rating a course. We also have experts read and analyze every text that is required for a course, as well as any "reading packets" put together by the instructor. In college reading courses alone, NCTQ has reviewed over 700 texts.

The third phase includes providing a preliminary report to representatives from the Colleges of Education to check the accuracy of the findings. Representatives are offered an opportunity to identify errors and provide additional information.

Critique of the Methodology

There are a number of critiques of using such data in the manner in which NCTQ proposes to use the data.

First, one must question the accuracy of syllabi as an indicator of the enacted curriculum in a class. NCTQ claims that syllabi are likely to “provide a more ambitious picture of the content of a course than the professor is usually able to achieve. Professors generally overestimate what they will be able to accomplish, not underestimate. For that reason, a methodology relying partially on syllabi could end up rating a course higher than it might actually deserve.” NCTQ provides absolutely no research to support this claim. While there may be research that supports such a belief, NCTQ does not provide any mention of the research and I could not find any research that addresses this issue.

In my personal experience, I am not terribly specific in writing my syllabi because I prefer to assess the knowledge and interests of my students before determining where the class should go in terms of content and discussion. Could this be the case with other professors? I think a fair assumption to this question is that other professors may, in fact, do the same.

Second, NCTQ provides no evidence that all syllabi are even collected. The methodology provided online repeatedly mentions teacher preparation courses and collecting syllabi from colleges of education. But, in many states, much of the content is provided by other colleges within a university, particularly for secondary education. If NCTQ is not collecting all syllabi, then there is a high likelihood that their conclusions are erroneous. If NCTQ believes Colleges of Education can demand syllabi from professors in another college, then no one at NCTQ has ever worked at a university.

Third, NCTQ mentions that syllabi, course descriptions, readings, and books are reviewed by experts. Yet, they never mention who these experts might be or provide information about their training. What types of backgrounds do these individuals possess? What type of training was provided to all these individuals? Did the training include individuals reviewing the same information to ensure inter-rater reliability? Were the results cross-checked by a second- or third-reviewer as is common in content analysis studies? We don't know the answer to any of these questions because NCTQ does not provide such information. I guess we would have to rate their effort an “F” if we were inclined to rate and rank studies of this sort.

*****Update1: In an email from Kate Walsh, she claims the new report actually addresses these issues. In fact, she claims the experts are listed and their backgrounds are described, they provided training, reviews were reviewed by other people, and there was training to increase inter-rate reliability. If so, great! They never did this before as far as I can tell. I have asked her to supply the methodology and descriptions of the review process—I don't care to see the rankings because they won't tell me much about anything.*****

*****Update2: Kate Walsh was NOT correct in her contention these issues were addressed. She is correct that the report (1) documents appropriate training for inter-rate reliability; (2) documents that multiple reviewers were used to review each syllabi and (3) “experts” who directed and worked on the project were listed. However, the qualifications of the reviewers is not documented anywhere in the report. I suspect these are young grad student types of likely ex-TFAers who have inadequate training in qualitative methodology and have little expertise in teacher preparation. More stunning is the lack of qualifications**

of the directors of the projects. None of them have any background that would qualify them to do such work. They appear to have no training in research methodology and no degrees or coursework that would communicate they have in-depth knowledge of the field of teacher preparation.

Moreover, think about how many experts would be needed to review all the courses taken by all students at all 1,400 or so programs that prepare teachers. I don't know about you, but simply reading all the texts in my five courses in one semester took quite a long time—far more than the “40 hours” that NCTQ claims it takes to review an individual program.

Alternative routes are excluded

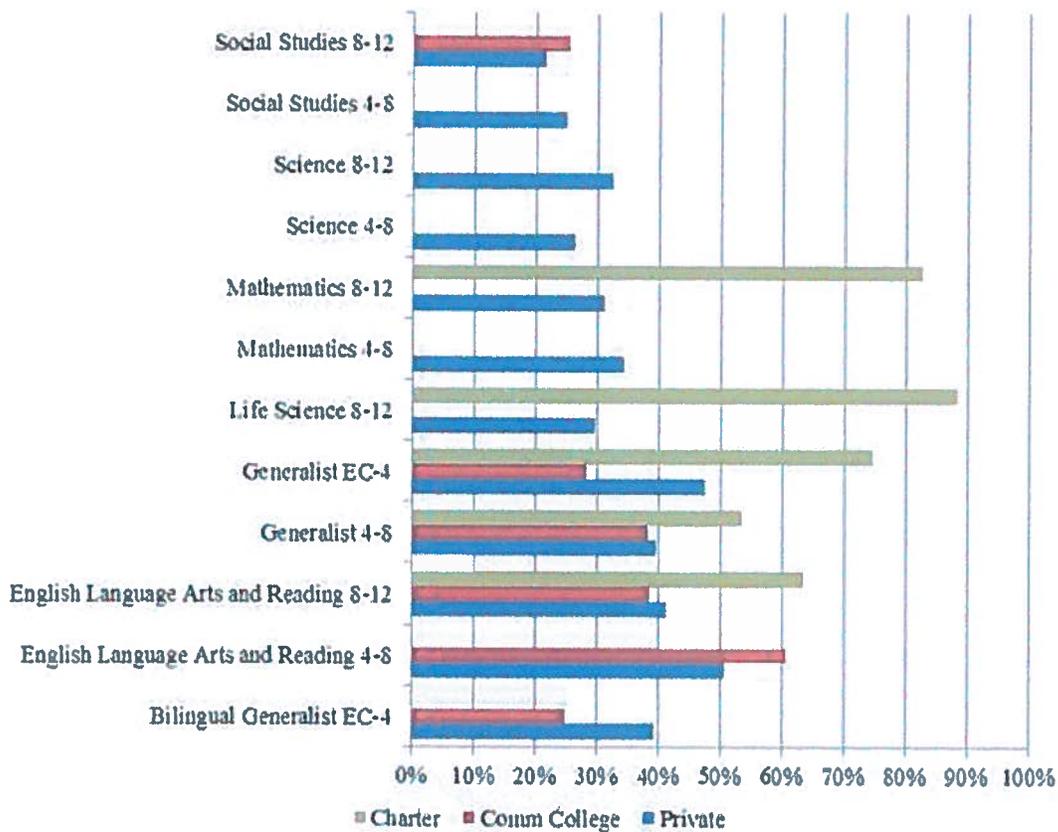
NCTQ also ignores the increasing relevance of alternative providers of teachers. In Texas, more teachers are produced by alternative certification programs than traditional undergraduate programs. In California, a substantial percentage of newly minted teachers are from alternative certification programs. The same is true for other states and metro areas around the country. Given the importance of these programs—particularly in large states such as Texas, California, New York, and Florida—one has to question why NCTQ left such programs out of the effort.

In an email conversation I had with Kate Walsh, President of NCTQ, she stated:” [Your study of the placement of teachers from alternative certification programs into schools by the percentage of poor and minority students enrolled in the school] very much jives with the data that Jennifer Pressley collected in Illinois, if those alt route paths are as awful as you and I both think or know they are. The poorest schools are getting these teachers, no question.”

So, the President of NCTQ believes that many of the alternative certification programs are “awful,” but these programs are excluded from the analysis. Why? Why exclude some of the worst programs in the country—ones that provide zero hours of pre-service training and allow individuals to enter with less than a 2.0 GPA? Why exclude programs whose graduates are far, far more likely to fail Texas certification exams (see figure 1 below)? Doesn't this exclusion simply give a pass to some of the very worst programs in the country, some of which produce over 1,000 teachers per year?

This exclusion calls into question the intent of the NCTQ effort. Indeed, I think a legitimate question to ask is whether NCTQ simply wants to reduce reliance on university-based programs and simply privatize teacher preparation.

Figure 1: Greater Likelihood of Failing a Texas Content Certification Test Compared to Individuals from Traditional University-Based Programs



Further, as the percentage of teachers from alternative certification programs has increased—especially teachers from privately managed alternative certification programs—the rate of progress on NAEP scores had declined to the point where Texas is no longer considered a leader in this area. Texas had some of the greatest gains in NAEP on the mathematics test of any state in the country. While Texas continues to make gains, those gains are much, much smaller than in the 1990s and the gains have completely disappeared at the 4th grade level. Has NCTQ considered the distinct possibility that increasing the share of teachers from programs other than university-based programs will negatively impact achievement?

Superintendent Critiques of Teacher Preparation

Not surprisingly, NCTQ has reached out to superintendents to invite them to write letters to the media supporting NCTQ and criticizing teacher prep programs. This is a desperate effort to find some evidence about outcomes since the NCTQ report has no outcome data. Without a doubt, some superintendents will bemoan the low quality of teachers they employ from teacher prep programs. But this is misleading in a number of ways. First of all, why would a district hire poorly prepared teachers? There is no teacher shortage in most disciplines. This says more about the poor hiring processes of school districts that teacher preparation since there will be some relatively ineffective teachers from every preparation program—including the very best programs in the country. Second, effective teaching is influenced as much by a teacher's

principal, conditions, class sizes, peers, mentoring, induction support, facilities, and materials supplies.

A superintendent blaming teacher preparation programs for poorly prepared teachers in her/his district is simply casting blame on others and abdicating responsibility for creating an effective hiring process and providing teachers the proper conditions and support to be effective.

Ultimate Impact

What will be the ultimate impact of the NCTQ rankings? I think a few predictions are on solid footing.

First, if programs pay attention to the rankings—and I think uninformed politicians will force them to do so—programs will start to game the system. By game the system, I mean faculty will begin to write syllabi that conforms to NCTQ standards. That doesn't mean the actual instruction in courses will align with the standards, but simply that syllabi provided by programs will align with the NCTQ standards. This is line with Campbell's Law, which states:

The more any quantitative social indicator is used for social decision-making, the more subject it will be to corruption pressures and the more apt it will be to distort and corrupt the social processes it is intended to monitor.

Thus, we will see the appearance of greater conformity, but that does not mean greater conformity in the enacted curriculum—what actually happens in classrooms.

Second, there will be increased pressure to close down or restrict university-based teacher preparation programs and provide more opportunity for alternative preparation programs, including privately managed programs. Let's be clear—this has already happened in Texas and, as a result, teacher quality has declined mightily (Vigdor & Fuller, 2012). Indeed, even Kate Walsh (President of NCTQ) and C. Emily Feistritzer (President of the National Center for Alternative Education), have both communicated to me personally that they believe the privately managed alternative programs in Texas are abysmal. This is important because the single largest producer of STEM teachers in Texas is privately managed alternative certification programs. Yet, these programs produce teachers who are far more likely to fail a subject-area certification exam (Vigdor & Fuller, 2012) and far more likely to leave the profession with three years (Fuller, 2009). Is that really what we want for teacher preparation in the US?

Ultimately, I think NCTQ and some other organizations simply want to de-regulate and privatize teacher preparation in the belief such actions will improve teacher quality (For a critique, see <http://fullerlook.wordpress.com/2013/05/27/de-regulating-teacher-prep-great-act/>). Evidence from Texas says this approach will have disastrous results on teacher quality and ultimately on student achievement.

REFERENCES

Boyd, D. Grossman, P., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2008). *Teacher Preparation and Student Achievement*. NBER Working Paper No. 14314. Washington, DC: National Bureau of Economic Research.

Eduventurs (2010). Review & Critique of NCTQ Study on Teacher Preparation Programs.

Retrieved at:

<http://www.units.muohio.edu/eap/deansmessage/documents/EduventuresNCTQMethodologyCritique.pdf>

Fuller, E.J. (2009). *Review of Teacher Preparation Programs in Texas*. Presented to the State Board for Educator Certification governance meeting.

Fuller, E.J., & Alexander, C. (2004, April). Does teacher certification matter? Teacher certification and middle school mathematics achievement in Texas. Paper presented at the national meeting of the American Education Research Association, San Diego.

Koretz, D. (2008). *Measuring Up: What educational testing really tells us*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Monk, D. H. (1994). Subject Area Preparation of Secondary Mathematics and Science Teachers and Student Achievement. *Economics of Education Review*, 13, 125-145

Vigdor, J. & Fuller, E.J. (2012). *Examining Teacher Quality in Texas*. Expert witness report in Texas school finance trial.

.....

Problems with new ratings of teachers colleges, point by point

By [Valerie Strauss](#), Published: June 20, 2013 at 10:50 am

It was [big news](#) this week when a conservative organization called the National Council on Teacher Quality released ratings of teacher preparation programs at colleges and universities and essentially slammed nearly all of them as being subpar. While there certainly a good number of ineffective teacher prep programs, it would be hard to know which ones from the council's ratings because of its flawed methodology, quickly exposed by many educators. They include [teacher education](#) expert Linda Darling-Hammond of Stanford University [in this Answer Sheet post](#). (You can read some others [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).)

The council, which was founded in 2000 by the conservative Thomas B. Fordham Foundation and is funded by organizations that promote a corporate-influenced school reform agenda, quickly responded to the criticism. It sent an e-mail about [Darling-Hammond's piece](#) with specific points of contention. In the following post, Darling-Hammond takes up each one and

explains why she wrote what she wrote. After her post is the e-mail I got from the council. Why am I putting her response first? Because she cites their points and then addresses each one, so you can see their complaint as well as her response, and because I think her logic and evidence is overwhelming.

Darling-Hammond has conducted extensive research on teacher [education programs](#), including “Powerful Teacher Education: Lessons from Exemplary Programs” and the result of a National Academy of Education panel on teacher education, co-chaired and edited with John Bransford, “Preparing Teachers for a Changing World: What Teachers Should Learn and Be Able to Do.”

By Linda Darling-Hammond

In my blog about the recent NCTQ teacher preparation report, I identified errors in their program reviews — a few examples of the many dozens I have heard about. NCTQ has responded with their rationale for the ratings, claiming that, in “fact,” they got it right. Below are the real facts about these errors.

I want to preface this reply, however, with two points on which I agree with NCTQ: First, while I have seen many strong teacher education [programs](#), there are many others that are very weak and need major improvements. Second, the areas that NCTQ rated — selection, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and strong connections to clinical training — are important areas of focus. I am pleased that attention will be directed to these critical aspects of preparation.

Two things, however, are most unfortunate: The NCTQ indicators of these standards do not provide an accurate picture of the candidates actually prepared or the opportunities actually offered by these programs, and they provide no information about the outcomes of programs — what candidates actually learn and can do. In addition, based on the inaccuracies that are surfacing for most programs, the data collection was obviously conducted very poorly. It is truly unfortunate for the field of research and the field of teacher education that the development of the data collection were done with so little concern for accuracy. And it is a shame that NCTQ and U.S. News and World Report would publish ratings without even checking the data.

NCTQ did concede that they made an error in their ratings of the Stanford [courses](#) I mentioned and has noted that it invites programs to respond with corrections to their data. But there is no published plan to correct the ratings, and I fear that programs may have too little confidence in the NCTQ methods to take steps to engage with them further.

Fair warning: Reading the details below could tire some readers who are not deeply interested in teacher preparation. But to actually understand what has been rated and what the truth is requires a commitment to dive more deeply into program design than NCTQ apparently has been willing to do.

Columbia College’s Alleged Teacher Education Programs

The Claim as stated by NCTQ: “The Review is so badly done that NCTQ asserts that there is an undergraduate teacher preparation program at Columbia when there is none.”

NCTQ statement of “Fact”: Actually there is: the Urban Teaching Track Childhood [Education program](#) at Columbia College.

The Reality: There is indeed no such program at Columbia College. Originally NCTQ rated TWO programs at Columbia College — one in [elementary education](#) and one in secondary education — that do not exist. After I raised this point, the NCTQ website changed and listed the programs at Teachers College, the independent graduate school at Columbia University, instead. The president and provost at Teachers College were mystified about this attribution and went on a hunt for this program. They could not find one at Columbia College or at Teachers College. It turns out there is a program by this name at Barnard College, which students can take as an undergraduate minor. Barnard College – as its students will tell you – is not Columbia College, and it is not affiliated in any way with Teachers College. NCTQ appears not to know what institution it is even reviewing when it gives these ratings. (For some unknown reason, NCTQ did not rate the program content, only its “selectivity.”)

UC – Santa Barbara’s Alleged Failure to Offer Critical Teaching Courses

The Claim as stated by NCTQ: “We got U.C. Santa Barbara’s ratings wrong because we missed the elementary math courses, English Language Learners courses and a year-long student teaching program.” (In addition, I had noted that NCTQ entirely missed the UC-Santa Barbara secondary education program, which they do not address in their rebuttal. The truth is that they did entirely miss that program.)

NCTQ Statement of “Fact:” “We didn’t miss these courses or the student teaching program at all. We looked at each one and each one failed our standards. That explains their low scores, not sloppy errors on our part.”

The Reality: The evidence shows that NCTQ’s raters did in fact either miss the content of these courses or rate them erroneously. Their ratings are not plausible when the details of the program are known.

1) On English Learners, NCTQ review said: The program fails to meet the standard because there is no required course that delivers instructional strategies addressing the specific early reading needs of English language learners and requires candidates to practice such strategies. This is false. There are multiple courses (6 in all) that treat these strategies.

At UC-Santa Barbara, Candidates begin in August with a 2 unit course on “Foundations of Academic Language” that prepares them for the Reading/Language Arts (2 quarters) and English Language Development (ELD)/SDAIE (an approach to teaching English learners in content areas) course series (3 quarters). In addition, they have a course in “Culture and Language in Teaching and Learning” that also addresses teaching reading for ELs. All course assignments are linked to student teaching experiences, and require some form of assessment, teaching, or other activity with the candidates’ K-12 students. Candidates are only placed in partner schools that serve a diverse student body that includes children with linguistic diversity. The program requires that Candidates must have opportunities to teach English Learners, and this requirement is stated in the application that schools use to apply as a partner. Each reading/Language Arts

assignment requires attention to learners in the classroom (which will include ELs) and the Literacy Assessment assignment requires a series of assessments with a student struggling with reading, generally an English Learner. Incorporation of Academic Language and ELD standards are a required component of the Lesson Design Template that all candidates in the program must use. All elementary reading/language arts lessons, and lesson plan assignments require consideration, assessment, and specific strategies for English Learners. The reading courses are integrated and articulated with the year-long three-course ELD/SDAIE series.

2) On Elementary Mathematics, NCTQ review said: The institution does not meet this standard because it requires that teacher candidates take little or no coursework designed to develop their conceptual understanding of elementary mathematics topics. It thus fails to ensure that all essential topics are adequately covered, regardless of the design of the instruction. This is false. There are 2 courses that do precisely this, plus another course in mathematics methods:

Two math courses are required of elementary candidates prior to taking their elementary mathematics methods course. The syllabi for these courses shows that they are focused on concept attainment both for candidates and for understanding how children think about these topics. The mathematics methods course builds on this conceptual understanding to enable candidates to learn to teach these concepts to children.

3) On Student Teaching, NCTQ review gave the program said: While the program provides student teachers with sufficient feedback it fails to meet this standard because it does not clearly communicate to school districts the desired characteristics of cooperating teachers, and fails to assert its critical role in the selection of cooperating teachers. This is false. The partnership agreement between the university and school districts outlines roles and responsibilities of university and school-site personnel and the characteristics of cooperating teachers.

The agreement makes it clear that UCSB-funded on-site coordinators and supervisors are involved in the selection of cooperating teachers and that such teachers must be able to model and develop the instructional strategies reflected in the California Teaching Performance Expectations, as well as planning with the teaching candidates weekly, sharing curriculum materials, and allowing candidates to explore approaches to teaching and learning found in the Common Core Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards. They must also teach diverse classrooms that include English learners.

4) On Struggling Readers, the NCTQ review said: The program fails to meet the standard because there is no required reading course that delivers instructional strategies necessary for teaching struggling readers and requires candidates to practice such strategies. This is false. There are two required courses in elementary reading/ language arts, both of which specifically treat the teaching of English learners, students with reading disabilities, and others who experience other difficulties in reading, and both of which are linked directly to clinical experiences that require candidates to practice these strategies.

The courses treat the Common Core State Standards in ELA, stages of reading development, and specific strategies to teach oral language development, word identification, phonological awareness, phonics, structural and contextual analysis of words, comprehension strategies, as

well as strategies for reading different kinds of texts. Candidates study the California Content Standards for CAPA (California Alternate Performance Assessment) used with special education students and they design accommodations and modifications for students in their classes who have special needs. When they complete the Performance Assessment for California Teachers, candidates must also design and teach lessons suitable for students who are English learners as well as those with disabilities and be evaluated on their teaching.

Cal State – Chico’s alleged Failure to offer hands-on learning opportunities

The Claim as stated by NCTQ: “An implication is made that our rating of Cal State University at Chico is wrong because we missed their great ‘hands-on’ instruction at its learning lab.” (What I said was that: California State University at Chico was rated poorly for presumably lacking “hands-on” instruction, even though it is well-known in the state for its hands-on learning lab and requires more than 500 hours of clinical training during its full year of graduate level preparation.)

NCTQ Statement of “Fact:” While CSU-Chico’s learning lab may be fabulous, it is immaterial. All we know is that Chico does not give student teachers adequate feedback or require that student teachers are assigned to classroom teachers who are effective.

The Reality:

With respect to feedback for student teachers: In its extensive student teaching program, Chico links feedback to candidates to California’s thirteen Teacher Performance Expectations (TPEs). Formative assessments include formal classroom teaching observations over the course of both practicum experiences conducted by university supervisors. Feedback is guided by detailed rubrics. Instructors and university supervisors guide and coach candidates in the completion of formative assessments that prepare them for the teaching performance assessment and provide them with timely feedback. At the midpoint and end of each practicum semester, the candidate, the cooperating teacher and the supervisor engage in a three-way discussion to evaluate the candidate’s progress in addressing the TPEs. This discussion results in the completion of a Teaching Practicum Evaluation Form. Candidates also self-evaluate, and all three individuals participate in a final evaluation. In the event that a candidate is not successfully demonstrating competency on one or more TPE at any given point during the semester, an Improvement Plan is implemented. The Improvement Plan details specific areas of concern and recommends specific actions that need to be successfully completed. With support and guidance, the candidate is given additional opportunities to demonstrate success. At the end of the student teaching semester candidates, their cooperating teachers, and their university supervisor participate in an evaluation of the candidate’s strengths, growth needs, and growth goals. They use this information to develop an implementation plan that is then carried forward to their support provider in their induction program during their first two years of teaching.

With respect to selecting cooperating teachers: To qualify, a cooperating teacher must hold the appropriate credential (including authorization to teach English learners), have three or more years of experience teaching in California, teach in a diverse school, and be deemed capable of effectively guiding a beginning teacher by both university and site personnel. Experienced

university supervisors provide input during the selection process, based on their own evaluation of teachers, along with site administrators who must recommend that a teacher is able to successfully guide the learning of a credential candidate. Both university supervisors and administrators make candid input about cooperating teachers in a data base that is maintained to guide placements. Cooperating teachers are removed from the data base when concerns are raised about their effectiveness.

Conclusion: NCTQ's unorthodox methods may have been incapable of finding these readily available data, but that does not mean they do not exist. Even more important is evidence that candidates in fact are able to teach when they reach the classroom. We need more accurate and comprehensive methods for evaluating programs so that we can properly guide the improvements that are necessary. The National Research Council will soon issue a report on more productive methods for evaluating teacher education. I hope their findings will be the focus of as much attention by the media and the field as these.

Here is the e-mail I received on Wednesday from Laura Johnson, director of Communications at the National Council of Teacher Quality:

Today, Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond posted a blog on Valerie Strauss' The Answer Sheet alleging that our teacher prep ratings are "nonsense."

Many of the objections she raised are answered by our detailed methodology and scoring explanations. But her post makes a number of factual errors that we feel compelled to address:

Claim: The Review is so badly done that NCTQ asserts that there is an undergraduate teacher preparation program at Columbia when there is none.

Fact: Actually there is: the Urban Teaching Track Childhood Education program at Columbia College.

Claim: We got U.C. Santa Barbara's ratings wrong because we "missed" a bunch of elementary math courses, English Language Learners courses and a year-long student teaching program.

Fact: We didn't miss these courses or the student teaching program at all. We looked at each one and each one failed our standards. That explains their low scores, not sloppy errors on our part.

Claim: An implication is made that our rating of Cal State University at Chico is wrong because we missed their great "hands-on" instruction at its learning lab.

Fact: While CSU-Chico's learning lab may be fabulous, it is immaterial. All we know is that Chico does not give student teachers adequate feedback or require that student teachers are assigned to classroom teachers who are effective.

There is one point that Dr. Darling-Hammond made which we have found to be correct. We did miss secondary math courses at Stanford University that should in fact be scored on our Secondary Methods Standard.

As we have said from the beginning, with 16,000 ratings decisions, it was inevitable that we would make some errors. That's why we set up the Forum process, where we will publicly address all objections to our ratings and make corrections where necessary. Programs such as Stanford's can send us their objections now and we will address them in July on our website.

We are pleased by the public discussion happening today about teacher preparation following the release of the Teacher Prep Review. This is how we are going to improve teacher preparation in America, by highlighting the best programs and helping mediocre ones improve so that every future teacher can be classroom ready, day one.

(Update: This version adds new information to Columbia College section)

.....

That NCTQ Report on Teacher Education: F

By [diane ravitch](#)

[June 18, 2013](#)

The just-released NCTQ [report on teacher education](#) gives an F to the nation's colleges of education. It was published in association with U.S. News & World Report.

But the report itself deserves an F.

To begin with, there are professional associations that rate the nation's education schools, based on site visits and clear criteria.

NCTQ is not a professional association. It did not make site visits. It made its harsh judgments by reviewing course syllabi and catalogs. The criteria that it rated as most important was the institution's fidelity to the Common Core standards.

As Rutgers' Bruce Baker [pointed out in his response](#), NCTQ boasts of its regard for teachers but its review of the nation's teacher-training institutions says nothing about faculty. They don't matter. They are irrelevant. All that matters is what is in the [course catalog](#).

There are many reasons not to trust the NCTQ report on [teacher education](#). Most important is that it lacks credibility. Not only is it not a professional association. It lacks independence. It has an agenda.

NCTQ was [founded by the conservative Thomas B. Fordham Foundation](#) in 2000 with the explicit purpose of harassing institutions of teacher education and urging alternative arrangements. I was on the board of TBF at the time. Initially, the new organization floundered but was saved by a \$5 million grant from U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige. Just lucky.

So, knowing NCTQ's history, and reading Mercedes Schneider's [posts](#) about the organization, I conclude that NCTQ cannot be considered a fair, credible, independent judge of the quality of [teacher training](#) institutions.

I certainly agree that some such institutions are weak and inadequate, though I don't think NCTQ's superficial methodology identifies them.

I also agree with the report's recommendation that teacher education institutions should have higher standards for [admission](#).

But I don't agree that the mark of a great education school is how many [courses](#) it offers on the Common Core standards or how attentive it is to raising test scores.

The great Robert Hutchins once wrote that the purpose of a professional school is to teach students to criticize the profession. Knowing the strengths and weaknesses of the profession would prepare them to make it stronger. The NCTQ report—looking at education schools from a mountain top—would have them conform to the status quo, to the conventional wisdom. This is not a prescription for the future, nor for the creation of a profession of strong teachers. It is a prescription for docility and conformity. Robert Hutchins would not approve.

.....

[Fixing how we train U.S. teachers](#)

By [Arthur Levine](#) June 21, 2013

Site: http://hechingerreport.org/content/fixing-how-we-train-u-s-teachers_12449/

This week, the National Council on Teacher Quality issued a report on teacher education in America that looked at 1,130 [university programs](#). While [the report overreached in its attempt to rate individual programs because of thin data, in aggregate it presented a deeply disturbing picture of teacher preparation](#) in the United States. It described a field in disarray with low [admission](#) standards, a crazy quilt of varying and inconsistent programs, and disagreement on issues as basic as how to prepare teachers or what skills and knowledge they need to be effective. The report found few excellent teacher-education programs, and many more that were failing. Most were rated as mediocre or poor.

This would be shocking if studies showing the same thing hadn't been issued regularly in recent decades. What *is* shocking is that [teacher education](#) hasn't responded in more than cursory fashion, often just criticizing the studies—though a number of institutions have substantially strengthened and sometimes transformed their programs, more than the NCTQ report acknowledges.

With a small number of exceptions, university-based teacher-education [programs](#) have lost the confidence of their publics—government, funders and growing numbers of school districts. Indeed, in the past month, four different pieces of legislation have been introduced in Congress to regulate teacher education. Two would establish charter education schools, empowering

organizations other than universities to prepare teachers if they can demonstrate high admission standards, rigorous programs and outstanding outcomes.

New York already permits this. In fact, all 50 states and the District of Columbia now allow alternative routes to becoming a teacher, which may or may not include universities. Organizations such as Teach For America and the New Teacher Project have flourished in recruiting high-performers to [become teachers](#) and placing them in classrooms after only a few weeks of intensive preparation. New, freestanding education schools are being formed, such as the [Relay Graduate School of Education](#), spun off from Hunter College in New York City; the [Boston Teacher Residency](#), established by the Boston Public Schools; and the charter-school-based [High Tech High](#) in San Diego and [Match](#) in Boston. For-profit companies have entered the field as well.

The point is this: University-based teacher-education programs are in trouble and could possibly lose their franchise. Can they be repaired, or must they be replaced?

In recent years, the focus has been increasingly on replacement, out of understandable frustration with an organization that knows its problems but ignores or refuses to fix them. However, there is also [a case to be made for repair](#).

The main reason for repairing university-based teacher preparation is the Willie Sutton principle. When asked why he robbed banks, [Sutton](#) is rumored to have said, “That’s where the money is.” [Over 90 percent of new teachers are still educated at universities](#); therefore, universities are where future teachers are. Important, too, is the fact that research doesn’t indicate that either university or non-university programs are more effective.

Another rationale for repair is that [it’s cheaper](#). University-based teacher-education programs are self-sustaining. Students pay [tuition](#) to attend, while many of the other initiatives must be continually subsidized.

Universities are unique, as well, in their resources. They not only have education faculty; they also have faculty in fields like math, history, physics and English to prepare educators in the subjects they’ll teach.

Finally, universities are capable of creating strong programs. The [Woodrow Wilson Foundation](#) is working with 22 universities in four states to create exemplary STEM teacher-education programs. In varying degrees, each of these universities has created a model worthy of emulation.

So what should be done—repair or replace teacher preparation? We must do both. If we choose, we lose. In the short run, repair is essential to producing the volume of teachers the nation needs. In the longer run, replacement will not only break the virtual university monopoly on teacher education and introduce competition, but will also allow us to create the models of teacher education that a global, digital information economy demands.

Repair requires two things: self-policing by the profession, and state-based action to drive the repair.

In academe, self-policing is known as accreditation. In the past, the likelihood that accreditation might raise teacher-education standards was, at best, remote. However, an important recent development could move the needle. The two teacher-education accreditors, which enjoyed reputations comparable to the teacher-education programs they approved, have merged. The new organization, the [Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation](#), has formulated criteria that focus on high admission standards, rigorous programs and effective learning outcomes in graduates' classrooms. Annual reporting is required. If this accreditation process is enacted, teacher education, a disordered and lawless Dodge City, could have a new sheriff in town. These changes can begin within a year, but cannot be completed for at least seven, given current accreditation terms.

States need to jump-start the process. Most have the authority to review current teacher-education programs, close the failing ones and invest in the strong ones. This is the perfect moment to do so, not only because of the steady tattoo of criticism, but because most states are hiring fewer teachers than they have in the past and can demand the best.

The replacement strategy should build upon the repair effort. Congress should pass an amended version of legislation entitled the GREAT Act, which establishes academies or charter education schools. To participate, states would have to agree to close their failing education schools. It doesn't make sense to create new teacher-education programs while maintaining bad ones—this would only be an expensive Band-Aid.

The bottom line: Marrying repair and replacement strategies for teacher education offers the best opportunity to change the way we prepare the teachers our nation and our children need.

[Arthur Levine](#) is president of the Woodrow Wilson Foundation. Previously, he served as president and professor of education at Teachers College, Columbia University.

.....

V. Scientifically Based Reading Instruction
Report Summer 2013

- Summaries of New Mexico Institutions

Scientifically Based Reading Instruction Report Summer 2013

New Mexico State University Response:

Candidates are immersed in the teaching of reading that includes the five components of scientifically-based reading instruction. As for phonemic awareness, the National Reading Panel (NRP) states that “It [phonemic awareness] is one necessary instructional component within a complete and integrated reading program” (2000a). As the NRP (2000a) recommends, our courses integrate phonemic awareness and phonics. The NRP found that phonemic awareness was best taught along with phonics, not prior to it (NRP, 2000a, p. 206; see also NRP, 2000b, p. 8). The detailed NRP report’s section on phonics states, “It is important to emphasize that systematic phonics instruction should be integrated with other reading instruction to create a balanced reading program” (NRP, 2000a, p. 97). As is suggested by the NRP (2000a), our courses examine and integrate the five reading components in context. Our candidates are exposed to texts that support and instruct the five essential components of scientifically-based reading instruction. In addition, our candidates have related field experiences where exposure to and use of scientifically-based reading instruction is demonstrated.

As an integral part of our elementary literacy program, candidates complete two field experiences, one in a primary-grade and another in an upper-grade classroom over the course of an academic year. In both field experiences, candidates have multiple and systematic opportunities to experience working with a reading program that is based on scientifically-based reading research (e.g., *Reading Street Reading Program* published by Pearson). Additionally, in our literacy courses candidates are expected to administer multiple assessments (e.g., DIBELS, phonemic awareness inventory, informal reading inventory, running record, DRA, miscue analysis). Candidates are required to demonstrate their knowledge of using assessment results to inform instruction with the goal of preventing reading difficulties.

The new common core has provided an opportunity for our candidates to begin development of instructional strategies that integrate the English Language Arts throughout the elementary subjects. This integration provides additional opportunity to assist classroom students developing of informational texts and also, as reflective in the common core, maintain and support classroom students’ developing literacy skills aligned with scientifically based reading instruction.

In summary, the College of Education has aligned its reading and text materials to reflect the recommendations of the National Reading Panel. Reading material and texts address the five essential components of scientifically based reading instruction. Further, field based experiences enhance candidates understanding of scientifically based reading instruction through contact and immersion with appropriate reading series using scientifically based reading instruction. Finally, the common core curriculum is an integrated component of elementary education.

ENMU Response:

The six hour NMPED required reading courses for elementary and special education teachers (RED 350 and 375 SPLED reading courses) have been redesigned resulting from 4 influences. First, the HJM #16 results focusing on k-12 student assessment and candidate field experiences changed the depth and breadth of assessment measures utilized during field experiences. Next, the reading faculty also revised the textbook selection according to the HJM recommendations. Additionally, the nature of the merged ENMU SPED and ELED licensure programs provided more emphasis on diagnosis and remediation of reading disabilities. Finally, independent faculty research into best practice, reading clinic findings of exceptional children, and a review of the NM Common Core State Standards provided relevant information for course revisions.

Wayland Baptiste University Response:

The Wayland Baptist University (WBU) elementary literacy instruction goes beyond the required six credit hours of instruction. Our program requires 12 credit hours (four courses) in the area of literacy: 1) Elementary Literacy, Phonics, and Instruction; 2) The Language Arts/Writing Process; 3) Content Area Instruction; and 4) Literacy Assessment and Instruction. These courses provide the students with effective reading/literacy methods and instructional strategies that are grounded on scientifically-based research to provide knowledge relevant to reading development, reading instruction, and reading difficulties. The review received by WBU in August 2010 provided positive feedback on our elementary literacy instructional program.

Western NM University Response:

In order to satisfy the new state requirements, WNMU made proactive changes in both the reading classes: RDG 410/510 The Teaching of Reading and RDG 411/511 Corrective Reading. Both classes have been refashioned with new textbooks, supplemental materials, and assignments. We have directed the students to practice the Connecticut Reading Test which is similar to the New Mexico assessment. We have designed a new class: RDG 416/516 Reading: The 5 Pillars to serve as a supplemental reading course which is offered every summer.

The components of these classes: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension have been carefully balanced and weighted to match the new assessment. Special attention has been paid to teaching both beginning reading and reading in the upper grades using informational text and digital text. Efforts to engage life-long readers continue with narrative text and award winning literature. Field placement for Corrective Reading includes twelve weeks of after-school tutoring in two different schools where the teacher candidates assess students and design individual reading intervention lessons based on the diagnostic reading assessment.

University of Phoenix Response:

Education students at UOPX take a theory course and a methods course. These courses focus on the most current research, theory, and methods of reading instruction, while providing students with background knowledge in language arts. Various instructional and assessment techniques, including research-based phonics, are modeled. A practical application project, based on work with a student in a K-8 school setting, is incorporated into course requirements. Additionally, these courses address instructional reading/language arts strategies, student activities, and resources that can be utilized, based on students' contextual information and assessment results. They provide foundational information about stages of reading, factors that impact reading ability, and the nature of reading difficulties. This information serves as a context for learning about the administration and interpretation of formal and informal classroom assessments for the purposes of screening, diagnosing difficulties, monitoring progress, and evaluating instruction.

UOPX faculty members, who are subject matter experts in reading and literacy development, reviewed and revised our course curriculum and student learning objectives for alignment to the Common Core State Standards in reading/language arts and the new Essential Components of Reading Instruction exam framework objectives.

Santa Fe Community College Response:

EDUC 205 Fundamentals of Reading Instruction - Text Book: *Literacy for the 21st Century A Balanced Approach* fifth edition by Gail E. Tompkins

EDUC 206 Teaching Reading for the Elementary Classroom – Text book: *Teaching Reading in the 21st Century Motivating All Learners* fifth edition by Graves, Juel, Graves, Dewitz

In addition to the course text books internet links or addresses for required supplemental materials have been added.

The courses have been redesigned to include the relationship of instruction to current national research in reading and literacy. The courses focus first on emergent literacy and second on intermediate literacy. Each of the Big Five fundamental elements of reading, phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension, is now explicitly outlined in the course syllabi and course schedules of topics. The courses require structured field based observation assignments for each of the Big Five, lesson plan assignments focused on each of the Big Five, assessment activities and assignments to apply knowledge of the Big Five. In addition for EDUC 206E the structured field experience requires students to work one on one with a learner, plan lessons in each of the Big Five fundamental elements of reading, assess their learner's reading and writing proficiency with standardized assessments and design lessons based on these assessments.

Course instruction includes varied assessments to inform instruction, diagnosis, and prevention of reading difficulties. Assessment application assignments are included for evaluating and administering assessments including screening tools that focus on skill level. Students are taught how to access additional and appropriate resources to further

support students who are at risk of reading failure in the least restrictive environment. Throughout the courses strategies for teaching Academically Diverse Learners are included. Comprehension strategies are taught as explicit steps to understand fictional text and informational texts and text book reading. These include monitoring comprehension, graphic and semantic organizers, answering questions, generating questions, recognizing story structure, summarizing, semantic mapping, KWL charts, previewing, Question Answer Relationships and self-monitoring. Both courses highlight motivation. Both courses have been reworked to include Bilingual/ESL and dual language as topics. Research based Bilingual/ESL and dual language instruction strategies have been included in each course. Both courses have been redesigned to focus on instruction on the importance of language structure in terms of syllables, morphemes, graphemes, and phonemes especially for students in grades kindergarten to second.

UNM Response:

Since the House Joint Memorial 16 Review, the reading faculty at the University of New Mexico have been working extensively to revise course content and create an organizational structure within our K-8 Teacher Education program that will support and maintain the highest quality instruction in the preparation of effective teachers of reading.

The reading faculty analyzed the components of the science of reading across the two reading methods courses and aligned all instruction to ensure the coverage of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension. All students are extensively trained in “phonics for the teacher of reading” (phonemic awareness, basic letter-sound knowledge, and complex letter-sound knowledge, including syllabication and morphemic analysis). Master syllabi were established in the fall of 2010. Master syllabi include all components of the science of reading. All instructors are required to adhere to the content of master syllabi. A reading methods correspondence course did not meet the current requirements of the science of reading. The course was sunsetted in September of 2010. Very few students took this course, but it was still necessary to eliminate it to ensure that the gap in scientific reading instruction was closed. Examination of reading methods coursework in the Dual License program began in September of 2010. An additional required course was designed to specifically address reading disabilities. Students in the Dual License program take this course.

On August 30, 2011, an interim policy ended courses for transfer as substitutions for UNM reading methods courses in order to ensure that students in our K-8 licensure programs receive scientific reading instruction. Reading methods instruction at field centers was thoroughly analyzed for required elements of science of reading. Based on this information, all part-time instruction of reading methods at field centers of Gallup, Farmington, and Taos was eliminated. Online reading methods courses meeting scientific reading requirements were created. All students at field centers currently take online sections to ensure consistent delivery of the science of reading.

New Mexico Junior College Response:

In our reading classes at New Mexico Junior College, we will continue to teach the “Big Five”: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension. As we cover the skills and concepts in those important areas, we will emphasize the following aspects in order to help prepare the students for the NMTA Reading Test.

First of all, the vocabulary may be difficult for some students. Therefore, we will emphasize the same terminology that students are likely to find on the test. By being comfortable with the terms, students should be able to focus more on critical thinking. In addition, we will include assignments which use open-ended response questions similar to those on the test. We will use the same directions and rubric so students will become more familiar with the format and style. Students will also be asked to apply their knowledge as they assess children in informal situations, create lessons, and then carry out their activities with those children. The students will be informed of the additional test they will need to take in order to receive their license. We hope emphasis in these areas will help prepare our NMJC students for success on the NMTA Reading Test.

Highlands University Response:

The HJM16 Reading Study Summary Report found that criteria were met for all elements of program analysis. Recommendations made have been implemented and other elements have been added to further enrich the reading program at NMHU.

One major enrichment is the addition of another Professional Development School (PDS) in the Albuquerque Public School system. The classes at this PDS site are sequenced so that the students, as a cohort, take Reading 315 in the fall and Reading 411 in the spring. More opportunities are provided for the students at all the sites to engage in hands-on practice in the development and implementation of lesson plans and instructional strategies in authentic classroom settings. In preparation of lesson plans, preservice teachers focus on the assessment and evaluation of students with different reading and literacy levels: Advanced, Proficient, Nearing Proficient, and Needs Improvement. Students in Las Vegas prepare portfolios which include lesson plans and activities to utilize in the explicit teaching of instructional strategies in all five essential components of reading. These activities and strategies serve to motivate reluctant readers to participate in reading activities while other activities serve to challenge the more proficient readers. The inclusion of instructional strategies to teach and implement comprehension strategies for use with both informational and fictional text also is emphasized and required. In Rio Rancho preservice teachers are assigned a literacy activity - Dialogue Journaling- to do over a period of eight weeks. Upon completion of the journaling, the preservice teachers analyze the first graders' writing and submit a reflection paper focusing on how the students' writing evolved and developed in meaning construction, syntax, morphology, vocabulary, spelling etc. In both Las Vegas and Rio Rancho, special emphasis is given to promote awareness of the needs of bilingual and ELL students and to provide hands on practice in

the development and implementation of instructional strategies and activities for these students. For example, cloze exercises are used to focus attention on the appropriate use of pronouns and students are made aware of those speech sounds which are difficult for bilingual and ELL students to hear and identify. Through the Dialogue Journaling assignment, preservice teachers gain insight and a better understanding of how culturally, linguistically, and developmentally diverse students engage in reading and writing. In Reading 411, students are assigned an Inquiry Project through which they explore an area of literacy. The purpose of this assignment is to give students an opportunity to enhance their understanding of diagnostic tools and instructional techniques to use with students who have special needs.

Additional materials and resources have also been added to the program. The Louisa Moat's LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) modules have been added to further enrich instruction in the five essential components. Also to provide a stronger foundation for the students' understanding of the research underlying the five essential components of reading, the Summary of the (U.S.) National Reading Panel Report *Teaching Children to Read* is used both as a resource and as an assigned reading. Additionally, to prepare students to understand and implement, the Common Core Standards, guest speakers –classroom teachers, administrators, and consultants are invited to present and discuss the implementation of the Common Core Standards in the classroom.

CNM Response

The two elementary reading courses CNM offers have been restructured to focus first on emergent literacy (PreK-3rd grade) and second on intermediate literacy (4th-8th grade) with each course structured to emphasize the different elements of the science of reading based upon the stage of reading development and learner needs. The sequencing of topics/lessons is explicitly outlined in the master syllabi and emphasizes the five components of scientifically-based reading instruction and in connected to the Common Core State Standards. As practice for students, and to use as an assessment of our curricula and instruction, we have implemented a final exam based upon the Connecticut Reading Exam. In addition to these changes, CNM has also increased the field-based assignment requirements and integrated the explicit assessment of reading instruction into the student teaching evaluation. Additional assessment application assignments for evaluating and administering assessments including screening tools that focus on skill level have been added. Additionally, students are required to develop differentiated lessons using assessment results to address differing needs of learners and prevent reading difficulties. Additionally, we have revised the texts to align with these curricula changes and are currently using the following texts: