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TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS IN MINNESOTA RANK AMONG TOP IN NATION FOR THEIR EARLY READING INSTRUCTION

Latest Review of Minnesota's Teacher Preparation Programs by the National Council on Teacher Quality Demonstrates Continued Adherence to the Science of Reading

Washington, D.C. — New [data and analysis](#) from the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) finds significant progress on adoption of scientifically-based methods for teaching reading by the nation's teacher preparation programs, with Minnesota ranking 11th in terms of the average score achieved by its programs.

At the national level, the number of programs to embrace reading science has crossed the halfway mark for the first time in the history of the *Teacher Prep Review*, with 51 percent of 1,000 evaluated traditional elementary teacher preparation programs across the country now earning an A or B grade for their coverage of the key components of the science of reading—up from 35 percent in 2013.

Programs in Minnesota perform well above the national average, with 67 percent (14) of 21 Minnesota programs now earning an A or a B. Minnesota's programs have remained largely unchanged since the last evaluation in 2016.

Six traditional undergraduate programs in Minnesota earn an A in the 2020 *Teacher Prep Review*:

College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University
College of Saint Scholastica
Concordia College at Moorhead
Metropolitan State University
Minnesota State University - Moorhead
University of Minnesota - Twin Cities

[\(See how all Minnesota programs performed here.\)](#)

The latest findings are a positive sign for newly energized movement across the nation to bring down notoriously high rates of illiteracy in the United States. Each year, well over a million public school students arriving in the fourth grade are added to the nation's ranks of nonreaders. Two-thirds are black and Hispanic children struggling in the face of an inequitable education system. Reading ability is a key predictor of future educational gains and life success, making successful reading instruction essential to achieving educational equity.

"The progress being made by programs comes as a real shot in the arm," observed Kate Walsh, President of NCTQ. "The resistance to teaching what is scientifically-based has been so formidable. The scale is now tipping in favor of science, and the real winners here are the students who will learn to read."

Now in its fourth edition, the *Teacher Prep Review* assigns a team of literacy experts to examine every course a program requires in early reading, looking at the planned topics to be covered in each class, readings, assignments, practice opportunities, and tests, as well as rating the quality of the textbooks used in each course. These experts look for clear evidence of dedicated course time as well as measures where aspiring teachers must demonstrate their knowledge of the five key components of the science of reading: **phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension**. All programs receive their preliminary grades well in advance of publication with an opportunity to appeal their rating and are invited to submit additional evidence for consideration. (See a short animated video explaining the methodology [here](#).)

“There has been a great deal of cynicism—and I include myself—regarding the capacity of teacher prep to make changes,” commented Arne Duncan, former U.S. Secretary of Education in the Obama Administration. “I thank the National Council on Teacher Quality for refusing to turn their attention away from this issue. This progress gives me real hope.”

For programs that want to improve their reading instruction, there are a growing number of excellent models. The 2020 *Teacher Prep Review* highlights 15 undergraduate teacher preparation programs which do an exemplary job teaching reading instruction to aspiring teachers.

See how Minnesota and all of their teacher preparation programs performed in the interactive *Teacher Prep Review* database: www.nctq.org/review/standardDetails/Early-Reading

Watch a short explanation of the NCTQ methodology here:

www.nctq.org/pages/TPREarlyReadingMethodology. For a more detailed explanation see: www.nctq.org/review/standardDetails/Early-Reading#howWeGraded

Read the full NCTQ summary of findings and see top-performing programs at:

www.nctq.org/publications/2020-Teacher-Prep-Review:-Program-Performance-in-Early-Reading-Instruction

Note: In Minnesota, there were five programs NCTQ was unable to rate, in spite of repeated requests to the institution to look at their reading syllabi. Those programs are listed here:

www.nctq.org/review/search/standard/Early-Reading_CBD--

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To schedule an interview with NCTQ President Kate Walsh or the individuals quoted in this press release, please contact Nicole Gerber at ngerber@nctq.org or (202) 393-0020 ext. 712.

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