



# Doc H's Blog

Kentucky Education Commissioner  
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## Teacher Preparation Improvement

This week, Kentucky received some good news about our progress in educating students. Indeed, Kentucky has made significant progress in education results since 1992. However, the report also showed that the U.S. is in the middle of the pack with regard to pace of education improvement.

My takeaway from the report is that yes, Kentucky has made great improvements, but we have much work to do to ensure our students are competitive in today's global environment. To accelerate the pace of improvement in Kentucky and the nation, a key strategy will be to improve teacher preparation programs.

Currently, there are three major initiatives being conducted that will address teacher preparation programs. The U.S. Department of Education will soon announce new rules and guidelines for [Title II](#) that will impact teacher preparation. These guidelines will require states to evaluate teacher programs based on levels of performance and also will require states to report on teacher preparation programs based on the student learning results of the programs' graduates. Also, the guidelines will require either state or national accreditation of programs.

The second initiative relates to the accreditation process for teacher preparation programs. The former National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education ([NCATE](#)) and Teacher Education Accreditation Council ([TEAC](#)) accreditation groups have merged into the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation ([CAEP](#)). Currently, I am serving on a commission to develop the new accreditation standards for teacher preparation programs for CAEP.

Finally, the Council of Chief State School Officers ([CCSSO](#)) is working to define classroom-ready and leadership-ready standards for teachers and principals. This work is very similar to the work that CCSSO did on the Common Core Standards and principles for accountability that were the basis for the No Child Left Behind waivers that 26 states have now received.

While these initiatives represent three distinct approaches to improving teacher preparation programs, they are being informed by each other, and the outcomes from the work will be very similar. Because Kentucky and the nation must improve student learning outcomes so that our students are college- and career-ready, it is a given that the most important strategy to

accomplish this vision is to ensure we have teachers in every classroom that are prepared to meet the challenge.

Our teacher preparation programs have done excellent work for many generations, but the challenges that today's teachers are facing are much more difficult than ever before. We are asking teachers to not only provide equity of access, but to also provide equity of outcomes. These outcomes are much higher than at any point in the history of our nation.

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