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Mr. Brian Kelly, editor, *U.S. News & World Report*

Dear Mr. Kelly,

As you know, the National Council for Teacher Quality (NCTQ) recently announced an agreement with *U.S. News & World Report* to publish their ranking of teacher preparation programs nationwide. The state of Florida has long been committed to holding its education programs to the highest level of scrutiny and accountability. The Colleges and Schools of Education in Florida welcome and frequently participate in rigorous reviews to ensure that they are preparing high quality educators that are aligned with state and national standards for teacher preparation.

The Florida Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (FACTE) is comprised of 37 institutions of higher education, both public and independent, with state-approved programs that prepare teachers to work in schools. These institutions work together with the Florida Department of Education, the Florida State Board of Education, and the Florida Higher Education Commission to establish and maintain quality teacher preparation programs. These standards and competencies provide well-researched benchmarks for the profession. Each institution of higher education in Florida continues to strive to improve the preparation for quality teachers. Annually, each institution reports to the Florida Department of Education regarding program areas of improvement based on data collected from several sources.

Unfortunately the current effort sponsored by *U.S. News & World Report* and the National Council for Teaching Quality (NCTQ) cannot produce any meaningful results since, as is recognized by most education professionals, the NCTQ research uses flawed methodology that does not meet the standards of basic scientific research. NCTQ utilizes non-evidenced standards that reveal a disjuncture when compared to education accrediting body standards. Please remember that NCTQ is not a recognized accrediting entity. The NCTQ approach focuses on a limited number of input measures and ignores any output data related to candidate performance. It is unclear how the end quality of a teacher preparation program can be evaluated unless outcome data are included in the evaluation. Additionally, NCTQ has traditionally been unwilling to adjust findings based on additional information provided or based on factual errors.

All Florida institutions desire to provide quality teacher preparation programs following guidelines and standards from reputable professional sources based on scientific research and evidence. We believe that a nationally recognized publication, such as the *U.S. News & World Report*, will wish to further examine the methodologies and past publications of the NCTQ before continuing with the development of a survey, and related publications that could lead to adverse and incorrect conclusions about teacher preparation programs.

Sincerely,

Dr. Terry Fasel
President FACTE

Cc: Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education
Kate Walsh, President, National Council on Teacher Quality
Sharon P. Robinson, President and CEO, AACTE
Martha Kanter, Under Secretary of Education
Frank Brogan, Chancellor, State University System of Florida
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