



NEWS

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Principals Support High Standards for Teacher Accreditation

Principals, teachers, and the schools they serve will benefit from more rigorous criteria for teacher preparation programs.

Alexandria, VA—June 3, 2009—The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) is pleased to support the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education’s (NCATE) newly announced initiative to raise the bar regarding the criteria used for the preparation and appraisal of teacher education programs nationwide. “Research of the past 25 years supports the premise that the most important factors in a child’s academic achievement are, first and foremost, a highly trained, bright, and engaged classroom teacher, followed closely by an effective school principal whose focus on instructional leadership reflects their teaching background,” said NAESP Executive Director Gail Connelly.

NCATE’s approach toward ensuring a continuity of success from teacher preparation to the principalship aligns with the principles outlined in NAESP’s 2008 landmark publication, *Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able To Do*, which calls upon principals to engage the total staff in shared leadership models. NAESP’s and NCATE’s criteria both recognize that when principals are able to use the talents of teachers who are proficient in their subject area and possess the ability to motivate and challenge learners at every grade level, the teaching quality of the entire staff is improved.

NAESP applauds NCATE’s new direction on teaching criteria and stands ready to support the organization—of which it is a longtime member—and the colleges and universities that prepare our nation’s teaching force. “Our children’s success in school depends on teacher preparation programs that are rigorous and encompass work that is challenging and relevant for 21st century learners,” Connelly said. “Given what’s at stake, it is imperative for teacher preparation programs to be selective and allow only the highest quality students to prepare for the critically important profession of teaching our children and leading our nation’s schools.” NAESP urges teacher preparation institutions to engage with NCATE and avail themselves of the valuable self-assessment process developed by NCATE and its 33 member organizations.

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Established in 1921, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) serves 28,000 elementary and middle school principals in the United States, Canada, and overseas. NAESP leads in the advocacy and support for elementary and middle-level principals and other education leaders in their commitment to all children.