

The Academic Preparation of Earth Science Teachers, 1983-84 School Year

Schools in the United States are experiencing a shortage of qualified science teachers. This trend is more serious in rural states like Idaho. The shortage has led to the widespread use of unqualified science teachers. A survey of Idaho science teachers in the 1983/84 school year revealed that earth science teachers had the poorest academic preparation. The following tables show the data indicating the preparation of Idaho earth science teachers as compared with all science teachers in Idaho.

	Earth Science Teachers	All Science Teachers
Number of Teachers in Idaho.....	113	632
Masters Degree	27%	32%
Certified in Subject Taught.....	17%	57%
NOT Certified in Science.....	1%	8%
30 or More Credits in Subject Taught	10%	44%
Less Than 20 Credits in Subject Taught.....	82%	39%

Average Number of Credits

Biology	27.7	26.4
Chemistry	10.7	11.5
Physics.....	4.4	5.4
Earth Science.....	11.3	6.4
Total Science.....	54.1	49.7
Mathematics	7.7	10.0
Science Methods	2.1	2.0

Credits in Subject Taught

Credits	0	1-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	17-19	20-29 minor	30+ major
Earth Science Teachers	10	18	18	6	5	1	6	7
All Science Teachers	16	32	51	58	50	39	108	276

Note: The information in this table is based on a sample of 63% of the earth science teachers in Idaho and 69% of all science teachers who were teaching in the 1983/1984 school year.

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