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Press Release

New Report: States Make Huge Strides in Adopting More Rigorous Teacher Evaluation Policies, But Lag in Using Evaluations to Better Inform Policy and Practice

THIRTY-FIVE STATES AND DCPS REQUIRE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT TO BE A SIGNIFICANT CRITERION FOR RATING TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

NCTQ Releases *State of the States 2013*

Connecting the Dots: Using Evaluations of Teacher Effectiveness to Inform Policy and Practice

October 30, 2013 (Washington, DC) — The National Council on Teacher Quality today released [Connecting the Dots: Using Evaluations of Teacher Effectiveness to Inform Policy and Practice](#), which provides a lay of the land on state teacher evaluation policy in 2013. The report finds that there has been an unprecedented adoption of more rigorous teacher evaluation policies across the states, with 35 states and the District of Columbia Public Schools now requiring student achievement to be a significant criterion for rating teacher effectiveness.

Most states, however, are lagging in efforts to use this new information about teacher performance to better inform policy and practice and improve student performance. This paper identifies what states are—and are not—doing to use teacher ratings to recognize and encourage effective instruction and to better prepare and value highly-effective teachers. While evaluation of teacher effectiveness is still very much an emerging field, it is not too early for states to “connect the dots” and build the policy framework now for how they will use richer evaluation data to improve teaching and learning.

"The teacher evaluation landscape has completely transformed over the last several years, which is a step in the right direction," said Kate Walsh, president of NCTQ. "States have made huge strides in improving evaluation designs so that student learning is front and center.

Despite this seismic shift, there is a lot more that has to happen. We have to take what we learn from these evaluations and apply it to teacher practice and policies so that all kids have effective teachers. Until we connect the dots between the evaluations and stronger policies that improve teacher performance, we will be missing the point of teacher evaluation and selling teachers and students short."

Key findings on state teacher evaluation policy:

- ***Annual evaluations of all teachers.*** In 2009, only 15 states required annual evaluations of

all teachers, with some states permitting teachers to go five years or more between evaluations. In 2013, 27 states and the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) now require annual evaluations for all teachers.

- ***Objective measures of student learning most significant criterion in evaluations.*** Only a few years ago, in 2009, a mere four states required evidence of student learning to be the most significant criterion for teacher evaluations. In 2013, 19 states and the District of Columbia Public Schools require student growth and achievement to be the preponderant criterion, and another 16 states require it to count to a significant extent. At present, only **Alabama, California, Idaho, Iowa, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Texas and Vermont** lack formal policy requiring teacher evaluations to take some objective measures of student achievement into account in evaluating teacher effectiveness.

- ***Multiple measures.*** Twenty-seven states require teacher ratings to be based on multiple measures of student growth and achievement. Almost every state (44 and DCPS) requires classroom observations to be incorporated into teacher evaluations, and 25 states and DCPS require multiple observations – for all teachers. In addition, 17 states now require or allow surveys of students, parents and/or peers.

Across the 35 states and DCPS **where student achievement is intended to be a significant or the most significant criterion for judging teacher performance**, NCTQ finds:

- ***Most states have yet to connect the dots,*** with little policy in place to use information about teacher performance in ways that can improve practice and ensure that all students have effective teachers. Eight states (**Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, Rhode Island and Tennessee**) and **DCPS** are ahead of the curve in their development of a comprehensive set of teacher policies that are well informed by evaluations of teacher effectiveness.

- ***Tenure and licensure advancement.*** As of September 2013, only about half of the states with ambitious evaluation designs (18 and DCPS) require that tenure decisions must be informed by teacher evaluation ratings. And in only 8 of those 35 states are teacher evaluations used to determine licensure advancement.

- ***Professional development.*** Most of the states with ambitious evaluation systems (19 and DCPS) specifically require in state policy that teacher evaluation results be used to inform and shape professional development for all teachers.

- ***Ineffectiveness.*** Most of the states with ambitious teacher evaluations (25 and DCPS) require that teachers with poor evaluations be placed on an improvement plan. And almost as many states (22 and DCPS) have policies that ensure that persistent classroom ineffectiveness is grounds for a teacher to be dismissed.

- ***Teacher compensation.*** While there are 10 states that are making some moves in the

right direction by supporting performance pay initiatives, just **Florida, Hawaii, Indiana, Louisiana, Utah and DCPS** directly tie teacher compensation to teacher evaluation results.

- **Reporting effectiveness data.** Just eight states – **Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Missouri, New York, North Carolina and Pennsylvania**—require that teacher effectiveness ratings must be reported school by school, an important indicator of how equitably effective teachers are distributed within and among school districts.
- **Layoffs.** Not even half (14 and DCPS) of the states with ambitious evaluation policies require districts to use teacher performance to inform staffing decisions in the event layoffs are necessary.
- **Teacher preparation.** Only a handful of states – **Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, Ohio and Tennessee** – have adopted policies connecting the performance of students to their teachers and the institutions where their teachers were trained. Just three states with strong evaluation designs – **Florida, Illinois and Tennessee** – use information from teacher evaluations to place teaching candidates with effective teacher mentors.

The paper also offers some lessons learned from the early trailblazers in implementing these new evaluation designs. We are at the beginning of a new policy era on teacher effectiveness. Redesigning teacher evaluation systems is critically important, but it is not enough. These new evaluation systems must also connect the dots to better inform teacher policy and practice.

To access the full report:

[www.nctq.org/dmsStage/State of the States 2013 Using Teacher Evaluations NCTQ Report](http://www.nctq.org/dmsStage/State_of_the_States_2013_Using_Teacher_Evaluations_NCTQ_Report)

The table that follows summarizes the extent to which each state has made connections between its evaluation system and related teacher policies.

NCTQ's State of the States 2013: Connect the Dots

Connecting the Dots

STATE	Objective measures of student achievement included in teacher evaluations as significant or preponderant criterion	Teacher evaluations are considered in tenure decisions (or state has eliminated tenure)	Professional development is designed/assigned based on individual teachers' evaluation results for all teachers	Teachers who receive unsatisfactory evaluations must have improvement plan	Teacher effectiveness is reported at the school level	Compensation		Teachers with unsatisfactory evaluations are eligible for dismissal	Decisions about reductions in force (layoffs) are based on results from evaluations of teacher effectiveness	Teacher evaluations are considered in decisions about licensure advancement	Evidence of effectiveness is considered in awarding licensure reciprocity	Teaching candidates in preparation programs are assigned to practice teaching classrooms with effective teachers	Teacher preparation program accountability is committed to the effectiveness of graduates
						Evaluation results factor into teacher salaries	Individual teachers can receive performance pay bonuses based on student achievement results						
Alaska	✓			✓				✓					
Arizona	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓					
Arkansas	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓					
Colorado	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓				✓
Connecticut	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓					✓
Delaware	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓		✓
DCPS	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				
Florida	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓
Georgia	✓		✓					✓	✓	✓			✓
Hawaii	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓					
Illinois	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	
Indiana	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓				
Kansas	✓												
Kentucky	✓												
Louisiana	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓
Maryland	✓			✓						✓			
Michigan	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓				
Minnesota	✓		✓	✓			✓						
Mississippi	✓		✓	✓									
Missouri	✓				✓		✓		✓				
Nevada	✓	✓					✓	✓					
New Jersey	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓					
New Mexico	✓		✓	✓				✓					
New York	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓					
North Carolina	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓								✓
Ohio	✓			✓					✓				✓
Oklahoma	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓				
Oregon	✓												
Pennsylvania	✓			✓	✓			✓		✓			
Rhode Island	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓			
South Carolina	✓		✓	✓			✓						
South Dakota	✓												
Tennessee	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Utah	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓				
Virginia	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓				
Wisconsin	✓												
TOTAL	36	19	20	26	8	6	10	23	15	8	1	3	8



NCTQ's State of the States 2013: Connect the Dots

Connecting the Dots in States with Weak Teacher Evaluation Requirements

STATE	Objective measures of student achievement included in teacher evaluations as significant or preponderant criterion	Teacher evaluations are considered in tenure decisions (or state has eliminated tenure)	Professional development is designed/assigned based on individual teachers' evaluation results for all teachers	Teachers who receive unsatisfactory evaluations must have improvement plan	Teacher effectiveness is reported at the school level	Compensation		Teachers with unsatisfactory evaluations are eligible for dismissal	Decisions about inductions in force (layoffs) are based on results from evaluations of teacher effectiveness	Teacher evaluations are considered in decisions about licensure advancement	Evidence of effectiveness is considered in awarding licensure reciprocity	Teaching candidates in preparation programs are assigned to practice teach in classrooms with effective teachers	Teacher preparation program accountability is connected to the effectiveness of graduates
						Evaluation results factor into teacher salaries	Individual teachers can receive performance pay bonuses based on student achievement results						
Alabama													
California							✓						
Idaho													
Iowa													
Maine			✓	✓				✓	✓				
Massachusetts		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓
Montana													
Nebraska							✓						
New Hampshire													
North Dakota													
Texas							✓		✓				✓
Vermont													
Washington		✓		✓				✓	✓				
West Virginia			✓	✓				✓					
Wyoming			✓					✓					
TOTAL	0	2	3	4	1	0	3	5	4	0	0	1	2

About NCTQ

The National Council on Teacher Quality advocates for reforms in a broad range of teacher policies at the federal, state and local levels in order to increase the number of effective teachers. We are committed to lending transparency and increasing public awareness about the four sets of institutions that have the greatest impact on teacher quality: states, teacher preparation programs, school districts and teachers unions.

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