

Blueprint for Change: National Summary

2010
State Teacher
Policy Yearbook



National Council on Teacher Quality



Acknowledgments

STATES

State education agencies remain our most important partners in this effort, and their extensive experience has helped to ensure the factual accuracy of the final product. Although this year's *Blueprint for Change* did not require the extensive review typically required of states, we still wanted to make sure that states' perspectives were represented. As such, each state received a draft of the policy updates we identified this year. We would like to thank all of the states for graciously reviewing and responding to our drafts.

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About the Yearbook

The 2010 *Blueprint for Change* is the National Council on Teacher Quality's fourth annual review of state laws, rules and regulations that govern the teaching profession. This year's *Yearbook* takes a different approach than our past editions, as it is designed as a companion to the 2009 *State Teacher Policy Yearbook*, NCTQ's most recent comprehensive report on state teacher policies.

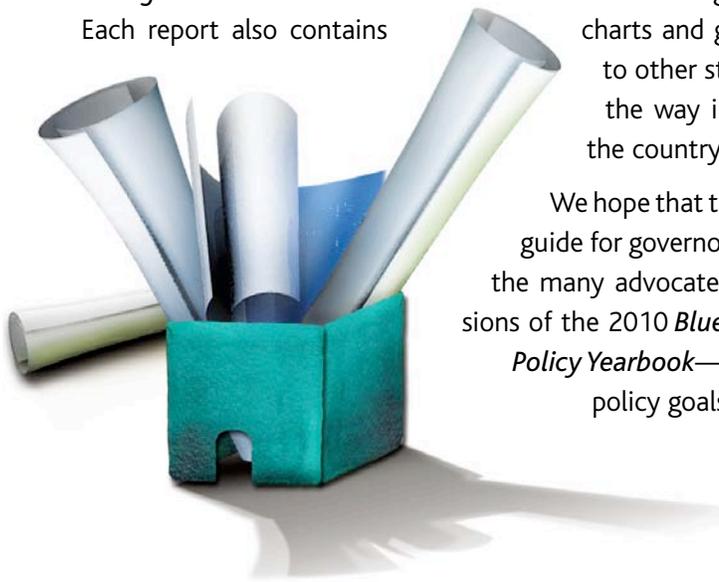
The comprehensive *Yearbook*, a 52-volume state-by-state analysis produced biennially, examines the alignment of states' teacher policies with goals to improve teacher quality. The 2009 report, which addressed key policy areas such as teacher preparation, evaluation, alternative certification and compensation, found that states had much work to do to ensure that every child has an effective teacher. Next year we will once again conduct a comprehensive goal-by-goal analysis of all aspects of states' teacher policies.

In 2010, an interim year, we set out to help states prioritize among the many areas of teacher policy in need of reform. With so much to be done, state policymakers may be nonplussed about where to begin. The 2010 *Yearbook* offers each state an individualized blueprint, identifying state policies most in need of attention. Although based on our 2009 analyses, this edition also updates states' progress in the last year, a year that saw many states make significant policy changes, largely spurred by the Race to the Top competition. Rather than grade states, the 2010 *Blueprint for Change* stands as a supplement to the 2009 comprehensive report, updating states' positive and negative progress on *Yearbook* goals and specifying actions that could lead to stronger policies for particular topics such as teacher evaluation, tenure rules and dismissal policies.

As is our practice, in addition to a national summary report, we have customized this year's *Blueprint for Change* so that each state has its own edition highlighting its progress toward specific *Yearbook* goals. Each report also contains

charts and graphs showing how the state performed compared to other states. In addition, we point to states that are leading the way in areas requiring the most critical attention across the country.

We hope that this year's *Blueprint for Change* serves as an important guide for governors, state school chiefs, school boards, legislatures and the many advocates seeking reform. Individual state and national versions of the 2010 *Blueprint for Change*, as well as the 2009 *State Teacher Policy Yearbook*—including rationales and supporting research for our policy goals—are available at www.nctq.org/stpy.



Blueprint for Change

This year's *State Teacher Policy Yearbook* offers states a new kind of tool for reviewing, evaluating and reforming their teacher policies. For 2010, the National Council on Teacher Quality isn't handing out grades to the states around teacher preparation, alternate routes, licensure, teacher evaluation, compensation, tenure and dismissal policies. Instead, this year NCTQ built off our annual *Yearbook* goals and recommendations to provide a customized and targeted companion piece to each state's 2009 *Yearbook*, which we hope provides a *Blueprint for Change*.

The individualized state *Blueprints* are organized into three main sections.

- Section 1 identifies the highest priority policy concerns that need **"critical attention"** in a state. The critical attention areas differ by state, depending on the current status and quality of existing teacher policy, and based on our own assessment of the policy issues that should be at the top of the list for that state's policymakers. Across states, we identify a total of 11 critical attention areas; therefore, the more of these areas a particular state has in its *Blueprint*, the further away that state is from ensuring that its students have access to the highest quality instruction in the classroom.
- Section 2 of each *Blueprint* outlines the **"low-hanging fruit"** in any given state—the policy changes around teacher policy that a state could implement in relatively short order. These are the teacher policy areas where small adjustments in policy could mean big results. In all, NCTQ focuses on eight low-cost/high-opportunity recommendations. The low-hanging fruit, like the critical attention areas, also vary by state. But readers need to take care interpreting the meaning of the assignment of a low-hanging fruit to a state. Unlike the critical attention areas, some low-hanging fruit can only be recommended to states with good policy foundations in place—but that have just a bit further to reach. A state may not get a particular low-hanging fruit recommendation because it already has a strong policy—or very much to the contrary, it may not get that recommendation because the state has too much critical work still to do in that policy area before low-hanging fruit is accessible. In the big picture, and in contrast to critical attention areas, a large number of these recommendations does not necessarily mean that a state is worse off.

The point is, each state is unique. The critical attention areas and low-hanging fruit identified across states need to be considered within the context of each state's *Blueprint* and the companion comprehensive policy analysis in the 2009 *State Teacher Policy Yearbook*.

- Finally, Section 3 focuses on several **longer-term systemic issues** that all states need to keep on their radar as they continue to develop and implement policies that shape the future of the teaching profession. These issues are performance management, pension reform and certification of special education teachers. While these may not be "front burner" issues for many states, they are crucial to any state's overall reform agenda.

It is also important to note that while we aren't doling out new grades to states, this year's *Blueprints* are based on an updated-for-2010 comprehensive review and analysis of every state's legislation, rules and regulations. Each state report includes a summary of the state's 2009 grades as well as an update of any important teacher policy changes over the past year.

The national overview that follows is a summary companion to the 51 state *Blueprints* prepared by NCTQ this year. We provide a review of the critical attention issues across the states, as well as a summary of the policy recommendations that many states can make here and now to move the teaching profession in the right direction.



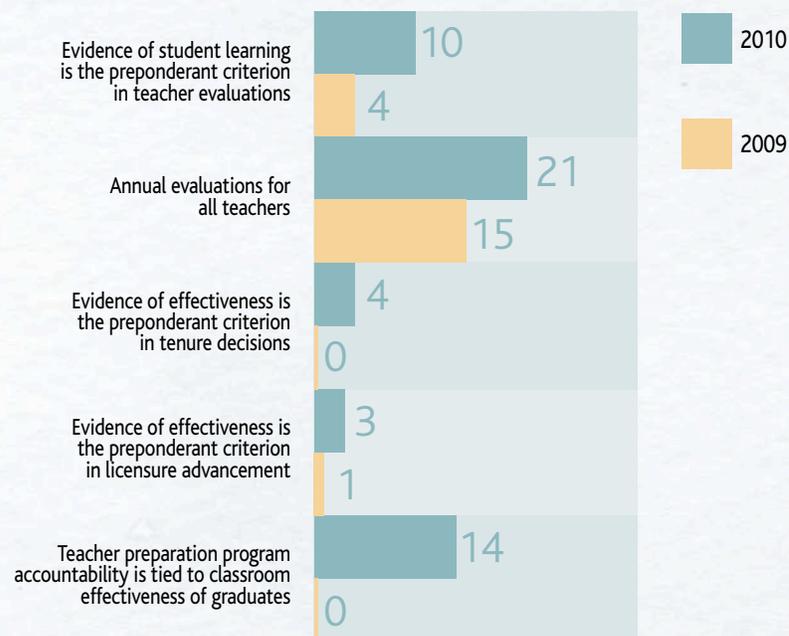
Latest Trends in Teacher Policy

This last year was not a typical year in teacher policy—certainly not typical of the four years NCTQ has been tracking teacher policies against reform goals. In 2010, more than the usual number of states did in fact make significant changes to some teacher policy areas, spurred in many cases by the federal Race to the Top (RTT) competition. Almost every state entered the race, and their efforts to be competitive and secure some of the \$4.3 billion in federal funds led to a number of new laws and regulations on the books, if not yet in practice.

The RTT program’s attention to effective teachers as a critical area of reform demanded that states address policy areas such as performance-based teacher evaluations, accountability for teacher preparation programs and increasing the diversity of alternate route providers. So it is not surprising to see some improvements in the number of states tending to these critical policy areas.

Figure 1

Notable advances in teacher policies



Our latest policy review found an increase in the number of states requiring annual evaluations of all teachers and a more than doubling of the number of states requiring that growth in student achievement be the preponderant criterion in teacher evaluations. Our review also revealed a large spike in the number of states adopting policies for holding teacher preparation programs in their states accountable based on the academic performance of students taught by their graduates. It is important to note, however, that NCTQ only gave states credit for formal statewide policy changes—meaning that for the RTT winners we did not count policy promises in their proposals that may expire at the end of the grant period or that only impact participating districts, unless they have statewide legislative or regulatory backing.

Critical Attention Areas

While this year's *Blueprints* are tailor-made for each state, identifying each state's own top teacher policy priorities, it is not surprising that states still turn out to have much more in common than not when it comes to areas in need of critical attention. Overall, the critical reform areas identified in the *Blueprints* can be summed up as four key problem areas for state teacher policy:

- Performance management policies that are disconnected from teacher effectiveness;
- Vague and/or weak guidelines for teacher preparation;
- Licensure requirements that do not ensure that teachers have appropriate content knowledge; and
- Obstacles that prevent expansion of the teacher pipeline.

In each of these critical reform areas, there are leader states that are pushing change in the right direction and sometimes serving as a good model for other states. Massachusetts, for example, was assigned the fewest critical attention areas of any of the states, with just three. However, the critical attention areas Massachusetts needs to address are all of the particularly crucial and hot-button issues in teacher reform—connecting evaluation, tenure and dismissal policy to teacher effectiveness. At the same time, there are three states—Colorado, Oklahoma and Rhode Island—that, while still having a significant number of critical attention areas to address, do not have evaluation, tenure and dismissal identified as serious issues in their *Blueprints*. These are states to watch in these policy arenas.

But more often than not, states have yet to do the heavy lifting necessary to take on the kinds of policy changes that could make real differences in student learning in the classroom. Overall, 27 states need to address nine or more of the 11 critical attention areas identified by NCTQ. Alaska, Arizona, Idaho, Maine, Montana, Nebraska and Oregon were assigned every single critical attention area.



Critical Attention: Policies that need to better connect to teacher effectiveness

1. ENSURE THAT TEACHER EVALUATIONS ASSESS EFFECTIVENESS IN THE CLASSROOM:

Evaluation is a critical attention area in

42 states.

States on the right track include Colorado, Louisiana and Rhode Island.

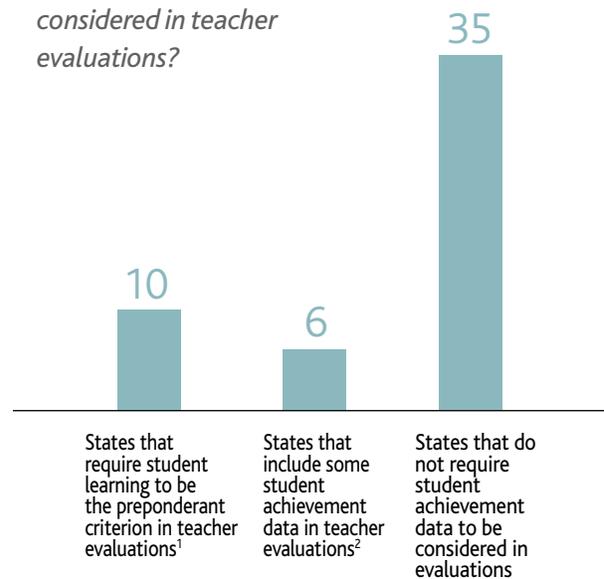
Despite some promising developments, NCTQ identifies teacher evaluation as a critical attention area in almost all states. Why? Because the vast majority of states do not ensure that evaluations, whether state or locally developed, preclude teachers from receiving satisfactory ratings

if those teachers are found to be ineffective in the classroom. In addition, the majority of states still does not require annual evaluations of all veteran teachers, and most still fail to include any objective measures of student learning in the teacher evaluations they *do* require.

Still, the landscape may be changing on this front. The question, however, is whether new changes in state policy will ultimately take hold in practice. States competing for Race to the Top funds felt great pressure to commit to a formal inclusion of student achievement and growth data as a significant component of their teacher evaluation systems. While there is still a bit of variation in how “significant” is defined across the states, and the devil is in the details as most states have no growth measures in place yet, 16 states have committed to including student achievement data in revamped teacher evaluations.

Figure 2

Is classroom effectiveness considered in teacher evaluations?



¹ Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Louisiana, Maryland³, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas

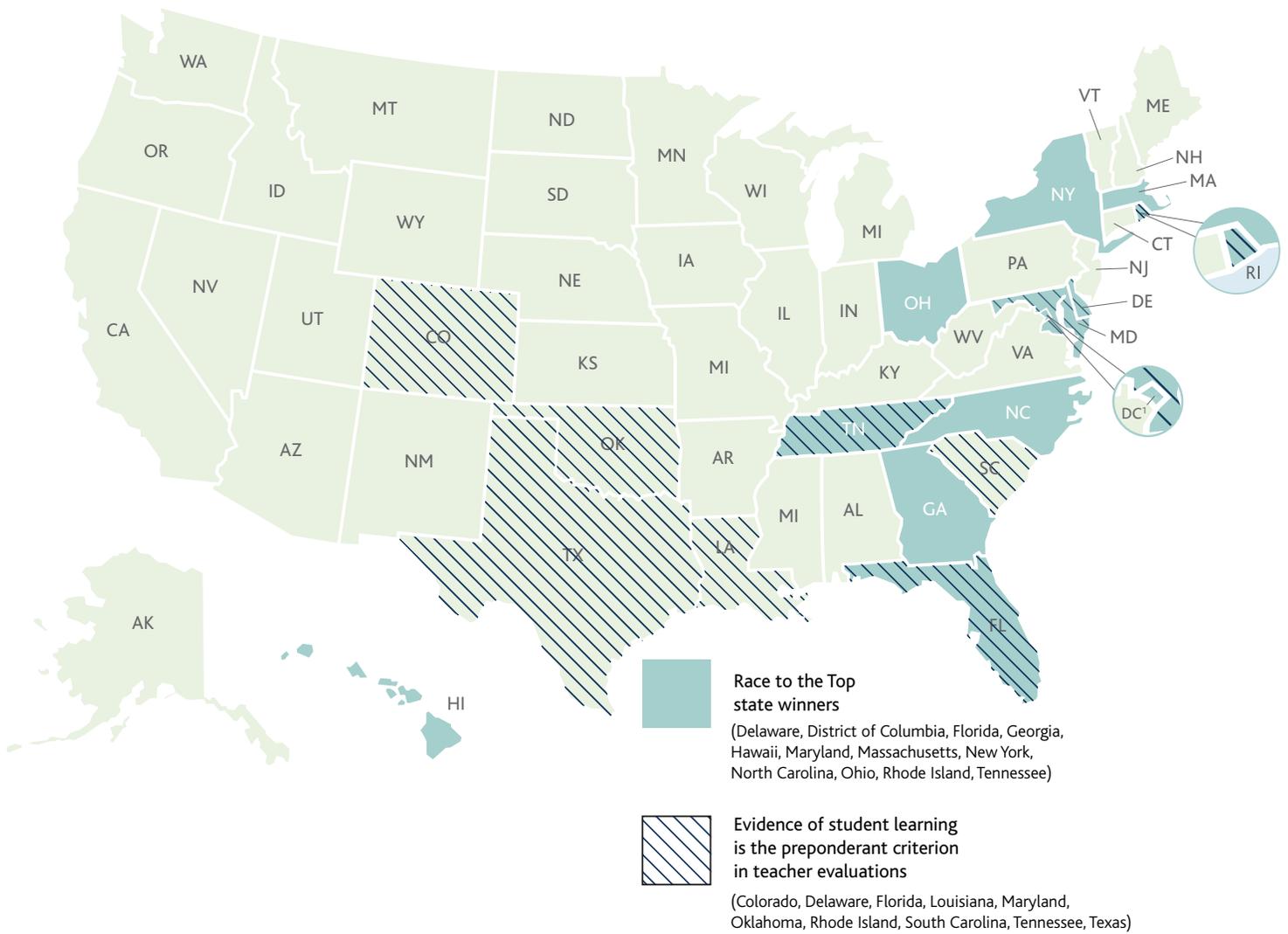
² Arizona, Connecticut, Illinois, Michigan, New York, Ohio

³ Legislation articulates that student growth must account for a significant portion of evaluations, with no single criterion counting for more than 35% of the total performance evaluation. However, the State Board is on track to finalize regulations that limit any single component of student growth, such as standardized test scores, to 35%, but add other measures of student progress for a total of 50%.



Figure 3

Race to the Top winners and other states requiring that student learning be the preponderant criterion in teacher evaluations



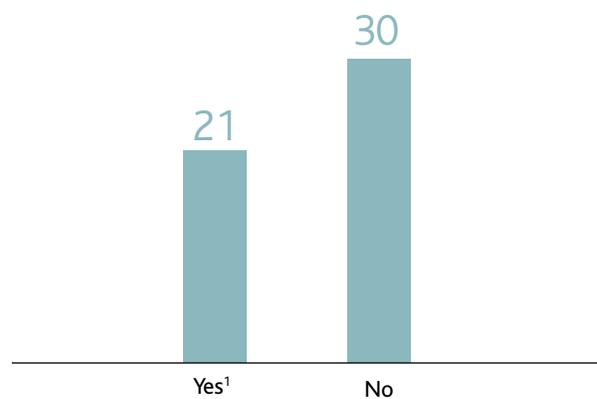
1 The District of Columbia has no state-level policy, but District of Columbia Public Schools requires that student academic achievement count for 50% of evaluation score.

Although we do not identify evaluation as a critical attention area for nine states, not all of these states are as far along as they should be—but a few stand out. In Colorado, Louisiana and Rhode Island, new laws or regulations ensure annual teacher evaluations require that 50 percent or more of a teacher’s performance evaluation be based on evidence of student learning. In each of these states the new teacher evaluation systems also have multiple rating categories, rather than an overly simplified and undiscerning pass/fail approach. Delaware is another notable state, ensuring that evidence of student learning is the preponderant criterion, not by articulating a certain percentage requirement, but by structuring the evaluation instrument so that an overall rating of “effective” cannot be achieved without meeting student-growth benchmarks.

There has also been some movement on policies related to the frequency of teacher evaluations. In 2010, 21 states (compared to 15 in 2009) now require annual evaluations of all teachers, including tenured, veteran teachers. Yet when it comes to evaluating new teachers, only 17 states—a number unchanged from 2009—require districts to evaluate new teachers early in the school year so that the needs of struggling new teachers can be addressed.

Figure 4

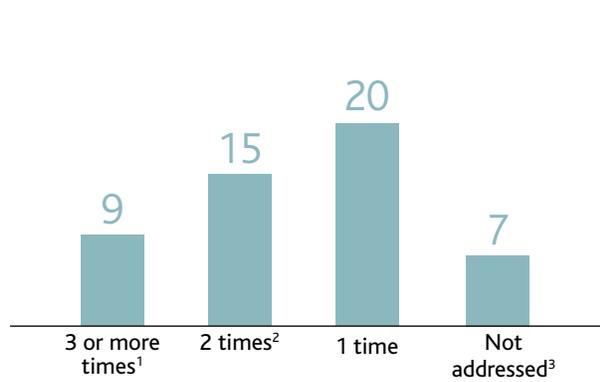
Do states require districts to evaluate all veteran teachers each year?



¹ Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Louisiana, Michigan, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Washington and Wyoming.

Figure 5

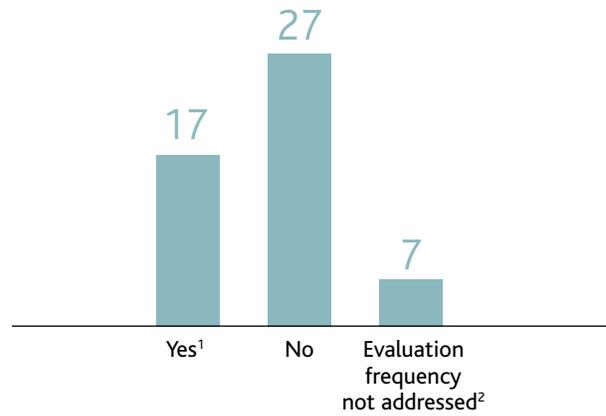
How many times do states require districts to evaluate a new teacher during a school year?



- 1 Arkansas, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada, New Jersey, North Carolina, Tennessee, West Virginia
- 2 Alabama, Arizona, Delaware, Idaho, Kansas, Maryland, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Utah, Washington, Wyoming
- 3 District of Columbia, Iowa, Maine, Mississippi, Montana, New Hampshire, Vermont

Figure 6

Do states require districts to evaluate new teachers early in the school year?



- 1 Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Washington, West Virginia
- 2 District of Columbia, Iowa, Maine, Mississippi, Montana, New Hampshire, Vermont

2. CONNECT TENURE DECISIONS TO TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS:

The point at which a teacher's probationary period ends, commonly referred to as the awarding of tenure¹, should be a significant milestone. Although these decisions are appropriately made at the local level, states establish the parameters under which tenure is granted. Strong tenure policy would ensure that these decisions are made through a meaningful process in which teacher effectiveness is considered.

Such a process is more than just a rubber stamp; it is a real evaluation of teacher quality and a deliberate decision about whether a probationary teacher should be granted this status—and the additional due process rights tenure brings—in a school system.

While few states have policy regarding the criteria for awarding tenure, nearly all states articulate the length of the probationary period before tenure is awarded. In most states, the probationary period—ideally five years—is not long enough to allow for the sufficient accumulation of evidence of effectiveness on which to base a decision. Across the states, however, three years remains a typical probationary period—this is the case in 34 states (up from 32 in 2009). Only eight states have probationary periods longer than three years.

1 While not all states use the term "tenure," the end of a teacher's probationary period generally has the same implications, regardless of nomenclature.

Figure 7

How long before a teacher earns tenure?

	No Policy	1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years	7 years
Alabama	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alaska	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arizona	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arkansas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
California	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Colorado	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Connecticut	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delaware	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
District of Columbia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Florida	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Georgia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Ohio	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
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1 2 6 34 5 2 0 1

Figure 8

Is classroom effectiveness considered in teacher evaluations and tenure decisions?

	Evidence of student learning is the preponderant criterion in teacher evaluations	Evidence of student learning is the preponderant criterion in tenure decisions
Alabama	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alaska	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arizona	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arkansas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
California	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Colorado	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Connecticut	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delaware	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
District of Columbia ¹	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Florida	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Georgia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Maine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maryland ²	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Massachusetts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Michigan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Ohio	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oklahoma	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Oregon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pennsylvania	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rhode Island	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
South Carolina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
South Dakota	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tennessee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Texas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Utah	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vermont	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Virginia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Washington	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
West Virginia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wisconsin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wyoming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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On their own, however, these tenure timelines don't mean much. Without a meaningful tenure process, the timeline is irrelevant, and in the vast majority of states, tenure is still granted virtually automatically. In 46 states, teachers are granted tenure with little or no attention paid to how effective they are with students in their classrooms. While there are a few states that have vague requirements for some consideration of evidence and a few others that promise that teacher evaluations will "inform" tenure decisions, only Colorado, Delaware, Oklahoma and Rhode Island demand that evidence of student learning be the preponderant or decisive criterion in such decisions.

Tenure is a critical attention area in **46 states.** States on the right track include Colorado, Delaware and Rhode Island.

Figure 8

- 1 The District of Columbia has no state-level policy, but District of Columbia Public Schools requires that student academic achievement count for 50% of evaluation score.
- 2 Legislation articulates that student growth must account for a significant portion of evaluations, with no single criterion counting for more than 35% of the total performance evaluation. However, the State Board is on track to finalize regulations that limit any single component of student growth, such as standardized test scores, to 35%, but add other measures of student progress for a total of 50%.

3. PREVENT INEFFECTIVE TEACHERS FROM REMAINING IN THE CLASSROOM INDEFINITELY:

The now infamous story of New York City's "rubber rooms" where teachers are removed from the classroom to pass their time at full pay with no official duties illustrates how difficult it can be to dismiss a teacher. While local district contracts are often blamed for these difficulties, much of the responsibility in fact lies in state law, which creates significant obstacles to terminating a teacher, particularly when the grounds are that an individual has been deemed an ineffective instructor. Almost all states have laws on the books regarding dismissal, but most focus on procedures applicable to criminal or morality violations, making ambiguous references to "incompetency" or "inadequacy." The result is that districts often feel that they lack the legal basis for terminating consistently poor performers.

A coherent set of policies around evaluation and accountability for teacher effectiveness demands fair policies for dismissing teachers who consistently fail

to contribute to student learning in the classroom. All teachers deserve a fair and objective evaluation and a chance to improve with the help of an improvement plan and support. And any teacher dismissed for persistently poor performance is entitled to due process that includes timely appeal. But policy in most states grants teachers multiple rounds of appeal. These policies allow cases to drag on for years, draining resources from school districts and creating a disincentive for districts to attempt to terminate poor performers. States must ensure that the opportunity to appeal occurs only once and involves only adjudicators with educational expertise.

There are at least two state leaders that are taking this issue head on. In Oklahoma, recent legislation requires

that tenured teachers be terminated if they are rated "ineffective" for two consecutive years, or rated as "needs improvement" for three years running, or if they do not average at least an "effective" rating over a five-year teaching period. In Rhode Island, teachers who receive two years of ineffective evaluations will be dismissed. Any teacher with five years of ineffective ratings will not be eligible to have his or her certification renewed by the state.

Dismissal is a critical attention area in

46 states.

States on the right track include Oklahoma and Rhode Island.



Critical Attention: Policies that fail to ensure teachers are well prepared

4. ENSURE THAT ELEMENTARY TEACHERS KNOW THE SCIENCE OF READING:

Despite compelling evidence about the most effective ways to teach young children to read, NCTQ identifies only six states that ensure elementary teacher candidates enter the classroom with these essential skills.

Preparation to teach reading is a critical attention area in

43 states.

States on the right track include Connecticut, Massachusetts and Virginia.

Scientific research has shown that there are five essential components of effective reading instruction: explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. This science of reading has led to breakthroughs that can

dramatically reduce the number of children destined to become functionally illiterate or barely literate adults. So, whether through standards or coursework requirements, states must ensure that their preparation programs graduate only elementary teacher candidates who know how to teach children to read.

But such requirements alone are not enough. Numerous NCTQ studies, including the national report *What Education Schools Aren't Teaching about Reading and What Elementary Teachers Aren't Learning*, have shown that few teacher preparation programs actually address the science of reading, even in states where there are requirements to do so. The only way states can ensure that elementary teachers enter the classroom with the knowledge and skills to teach young children to read is through an assessment.

Ideally, this would be a stand-alone test, such as the excellent assessments required by Massachusetts, Connecticut and Virginia. But if it is combined with

other subject matter, there must at least be a separate passing score so that the adequacy of a teacher's science of reading knowledge can be evaluated on its own. In the end, a rigorous assessment is the only way to ensure that no student has an elementary teacher unprepared to teach him or her to read.

5. ENSURE THAT ELEMENTARY TEACHERS KNOW ELEMENTARY CONTENT MATH:

Aspiring elementary teachers must begin to acquire a deep conceptual knowledge of the mathematics they will teach, moving well beyond mere procedural understanding. Leading mathematicians and math educators have found that elementary teachers are not well served by mathematics courses designed for a general audience and that methods courses do not provide sufficient content preparation. As a result, states need to specifically articulate that preparation programs deliver mathematics content geared to the explicit needs of elementary teachers.

For 2010, NCTQ identifies only two states—Massachusetts and Minnesota—that have policies in place to help ensure that elementary school teachers statewide have sufficient knowledge of math content. Massachusetts is the clear role model, requiring elementary teacher candidates to pass a rigorous test of mathematics content covering topics specifically geared to the needs of elementary teachers. Minnesota's new certification test includes a separate subtest, and although it includes some other topics, it is impossible to pass if candidates fail the math portion.

Preparation to teach mathematics is a critical attention area in

49 states.

A state on the right track is Massachusetts.

6. ENSURE ADEQUATE SUBJECT-MATTER PREPARATION FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS:

Among the critical issues covered in the *Blueprints*, this topic had the fewest states identified as needing to give it critical attention. That said, it is by our count, still a very critical issue in 22 states.

Middle school licensure is a critical attention area in

22 states.

States on the right track include Georgia, Kentucky, and Louisiana.

What is at stake? The middle school grades are critical years of schooling, yet too many states still fail to distinguish the knowledge and skills needed by middle school teachers from those needed by elementary teachers. Whether teaching a single subject in a

departmentalized setting or teaching multiple subjects in a self-contained setting, middle school teachers must be able to teach significantly more advanced content than elementary teachers do. The key policy problem here is the extent to which states continue to offer a generalist K-8 license. Such policies completely fail to address the reality that teaching, for example, seventh- and eighth-grade math or science is a significantly different enterprise than teaching those subjects to first or second graders. In 2010, there are still only 29 states that differentiate preparation between elementary and middle school teachers—leaving 22 that allow middle school teachers, in all or at least some circumstances, to teach on a K-8 generalist license.

Figure 9

- 1 Although California has a standalone test of reading pedagogy, the ability of this test to screen out candidates who do not know the science of reading has been questioned.
- 2 Florida's licensure test for elementary teachers includes a strong focus on the science of reading but does not report a separate subscore for this content.

Figure 9

Do states ensure that teachers are well prepared?

	Ensures elementary teachers know the science of reading	Ensures elementary teachers know elementary content math	Differentiates preparation between elementary and middle school teachers
Alabama	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Alaska	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arizona	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arkansas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
California	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Colorado	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Connecticut	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Delaware	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
District of Columbia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Florida	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Georgia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Idaho	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indiana	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Iowa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Kansas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Kentucky	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Louisiana	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maryland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Massachusetts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Michigan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minnesota	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mississippi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Missouri	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Montana	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nebraska	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nevada	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New Hampshire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New Jersey	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
New Mexico	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New York	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
North Carolina	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
North Dakota	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ohio	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Oklahoma	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oregon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pennsylvania	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rhode Island	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
South Carolina	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
South Dakota	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tennessee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Texas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Utah	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vermont	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Virginia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Washington	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
West Virginia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wisconsin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wyoming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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7. ENSURE THAT TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS ARE ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE QUALITY OF THE TEACHERS THEY PRODUCE:

Across the nation, there may just be real change under way in this area—with a large increase in states adopting policies largely related to proposals made last year as part of their RTT program applications. Before this year, NCTQ identified only three states—New Jersey, Tennessee and Texas—that even collected meaningful data on the student learning gains of teachers who graduated from teacher preparation programs in the state. And no states were using those data to evaluate teacher preparation program performance.²

But that has changed dramatically in 2010. This year, NCTQ's review of state policies found 14 states with policies in place or coming online to use student outcomes to hold teacher preparation institutions accountable for the performance of the teachers they produce.

Beginning this year in Colorado, the state must annually report on the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs using aggregate data, including the correlation among different preparation programs and student

academic growth, educator placement, and educator mobility and retention. Louisiana pioneered the use of value-added analysis to assess the impact of teacher preparation programs, and has now begun to use these analyses to hold programs accountable for their outcomes. Low-performing programs risk losing state approval if improvements are not made according to specified timelines.

Despite a marked change in state policies in 2010, however, the majority of states have much to do to ensure that teacher preparation institutions are held accountable for the caliber of the teachers they produce. To do

it well, states must collect objective program-specific data such as scores on licensing tests and beyond, including satisfaction ratings by schools that employ graduates, teacher evaluation results and the academic gains of graduates' students. States must establish minimum standards of performance in these areas and, as we discuss later in "low-hanging fruit," at a minimum, should publish

all data they collect on individual teacher preparation programs so that prospective teachers and the public have the ability to evaluate programs for themselves.

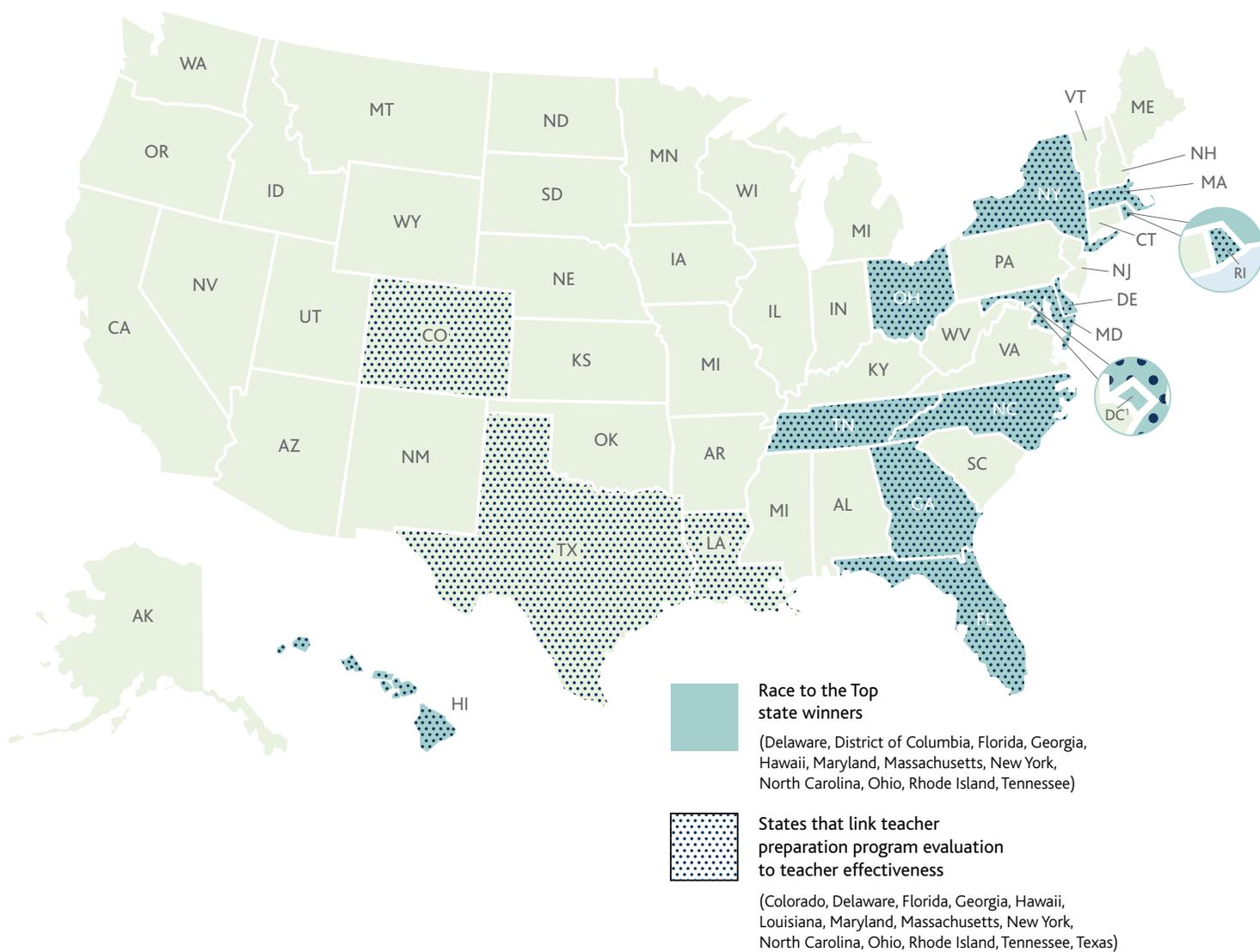
Teacher preparation program accountability is a critical attention area in **30 states.** States on the right track include Colorado and Louisiana.

² See 2009 *Yearbook*. In 2009, Louisiana was piloting the use of value-added data that connects student achievement to teacher preparation programs, but was not yet using the results for accountability purposes.



Figure 10

Are states using student achievement data to hold teacher preparation programs accountable?



1 Although the District of Columbia has no state level policy, District of Columbia Public Schools plans to connect student achievement to teacher preparation programs.



Critical Attention: Policies that license teachers who may lack subject-matter knowledge

8. CLOSE LICENSURE LOOPHOLES TO ENSURE THAT TEACHERS KNOW THE CONTENT THEY TEACH:

Licensure loopholes are a critical attention area in

34 states.

States on the right track include Mississippi, Nevada and New Jersey.

All students are entitled to teachers who know the subject matter they are teaching. Permitting individuals who have not yet passed state licensing tests to teach neglects the needs of students, and extends personal consideration to adults who may not be able to meet

minimal state standards. Licensing tests are an important minimum benchmark in the profession, and states that allow teachers to postpone passing these tests are abandoning one of the basic responsibilities of licensure. Unfortunately, the reality is that the majority of states place students at risk by allowing teachers in classrooms who have not passed all required subject-matter tests.

It is understandable that states may, under limited circumstances, need to fill a small number of classroom positions with individuals who do not hold full teaching credentials. Many states, however, issue either renewable or multi-year emergency licenses, meaning that teachers who have not met all minimum requirements are allowed to remain in classrooms for extended—and perhaps indefinite—periods of time.

Mississippi, Nevada and New Jersey are identified as state leaders in this area, and are among seven states that do not award emergency or provisional licenses or allow teachers to defer licensing tests—that is, they require all teachers to pass all subject-matter tests as a condition of their initial licensure.

9. ENSURE THAT ELEMENTARY CONTENT TESTS ADEQUATELY ASSESS CONTENT KNOWLEDGE IN EACH SUBJECT AREA:

Figure 11 explains better than words why NCTQ calls out 50 states as needing to give critical attention to whether the content knowledge bar they have set for allowing elementary teachers in the classroom is sufficient. In all but Massachusetts, the expectations for how well teacher candidates will perform on licensing exams (which, in many cases, are of very questionable rigor) are exceedingly low. Only Massachusetts has a rigorous test that requires teachers receiving licenses in the state to score at or above the average score for all teachers taking the test.

Matters are made worse because most states require a broad and general elementary teacher licensing exam, such as the Praxis II general subject-matter test. This assessment does not report teacher performance in each subject area, making it possible to pass the licensing test while still failing some subject areas within the test.

The combination of very general tests and below-average expectations for performance on teacher assessments calls into question whether many or most current state teacher licensing assessments for elementary school teachers are capable of providing any assurance whatsoever of content knowledge.

Elementary licensure tests are a critical attention area in

50 states.

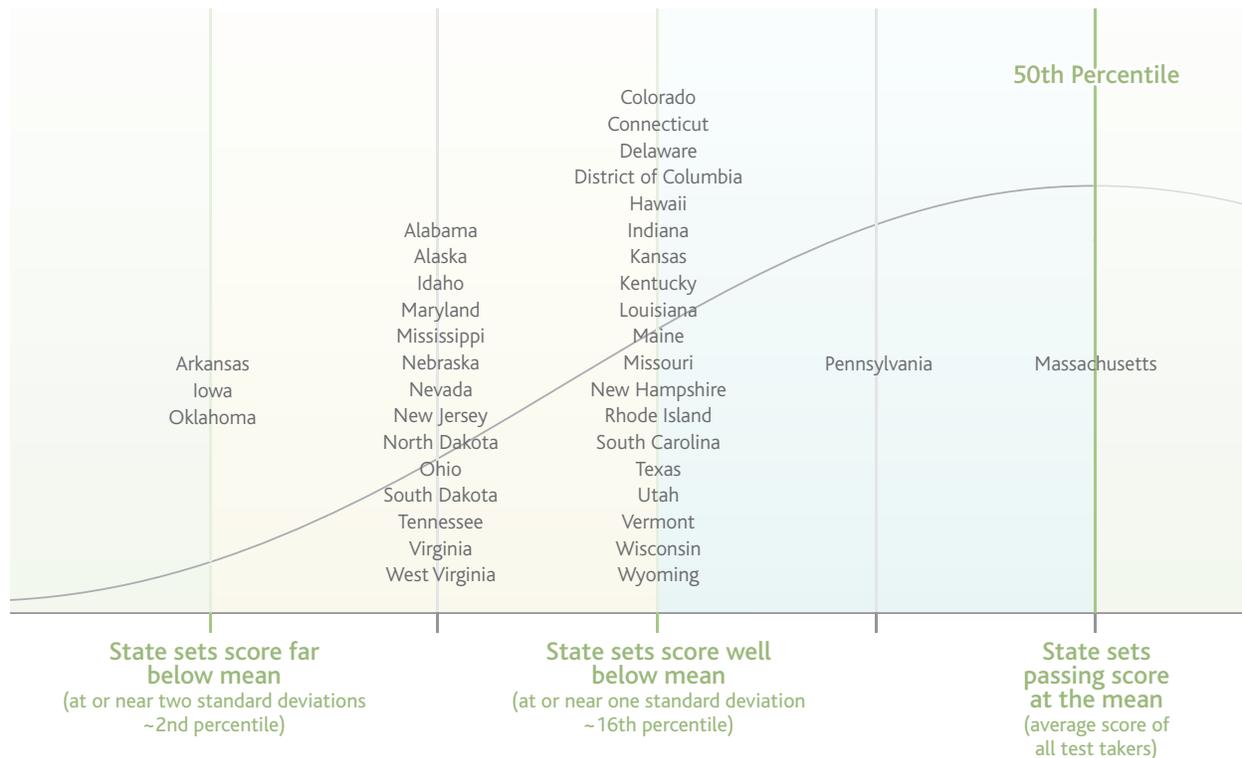
A state on the right track is Massachusetts.

Because of our concerns about the rigor and standards of content knowledge assessments across the states, NCTQ recommends that, at a minimum, states should require separate passing scores for each subject area. Without them, it is impossible to measure teacher knowledge of individual subjects, especially given

generally low passing score expectations across the states. Our findings here also reiterate why we identify licensing loopholes as a critical attention area. Given the questionable quality of elementary licensing assessments, states that allow individuals to teach without meeting even this minimal benchmark do a great disservice to students.

Figure 11

Where do states set the passing score on elementary content licensure tests?¹



¹ Data not available for Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, and Washington. Montana does not require a content test. Colorado cut score is for Praxis II, not PLACE.



Critical Attention: Policies that limit the teacher pipeline

10. PROVIDE FLEXIBILITY TO ALTERNATE ROUTE TEACHERS IN DEMONSTRATING CONTENT KNOWLEDGE:

The concept behind the alternate route into teaching is that the nontraditional candidate is able to concentrate on acquiring professional knowledge and skills because he or she has strong subject-area knowledge.

States must have high standards for alternate route teachers. NCTQ recommends that states require alternate routes to have academic expectations that exceed those for traditional programs in terms of grade point averages, for example. States also need to require that alternate route candidates demonstrate strong subject-area knowledge by passing a subject-matter test in advance of entering the classroom. This should be the kind of rigorous subject-matter test that any teacher candidate—regardless of academic major, coursework or experience—would be required to pass before teaching. Rigorous content tests would also serve as a way to screen candidates for alternate route admission.

Alternate route admissions is a critical attention area in

38 states.

States on the right track include Michigan and Oklahoma.

But alternate routes also need to be flexible and streamlined. Some states require that candidates major in the area in which they will teach or require excessive subject-area coursework for alternate route candidates. Without the option to allow alternate route candidates to test out of coursework requirements by demonstrating their knowledge on a rigorous test, such policies defeat the very purpose of the alternate route.

State leaders in this area include Michigan and Oklahoma. Michigan was singled out because it has recently changed its policy to raise its admission requirements while also providing flexibility to candidates. Michigan now requires that programs only accept participants who hold a bachelor's, master's, doctorate or professional degree from an accredited college or university with at least a 3.0 grade point average. Participants must also pass both the basic skills examination and appropriate subject-area exams for each subject area of certification. The state no longer requires a major or subject-area coursework in the subject the candidate wishes to teach. Oklahoma also requires that alternate route candidates pass subject-matter tests without requiring a major in the subject to be taught.

11. BROADEN ALTERNATE ROUTE USAGE AND PROVIDERS:

To date, many states have limited the usage and providers of their alternate routes, preventing them from providing a true alternative pathway into the teaching profession. North Dakota does not have any alternate route to certification, and other states unnecessarily restrict providers to the state itself (like Alaska), or to college and university providers. There are 21 states that restrict providers to colleges and universities and do not allow providers such as districts or nonprofit organizations to develop and implement viable alternate route programs.

But there are some states on the right track, especially with some impetus from last year's Race to the Top competition. New York recently adopted a new policy broadening the providers of its alternate route to include nonprofit organizations, ending its limitation that alternate route programs can only be offered by colleges and universities in partnership with local school districts. Illinois, too, now allows the providers of its alternate route to include nonprofit organizations, no longer requiring such providers to partner with an institution of higher education. Washington now allows alternate route programs to be offered by nonhigher-education providers.

Alternate route diversity is a critical attention area in **28 states.**

States on the right track include Illinois, New York and Washington.

Figure 12

- 1 Alaska's alternate route is operated by the state department of education.
- 2 ABCTE is also an approved provider.
- 3 North Dakota does not have an alternate route to certification.

Figure 12

Do states permit alternate route providers other than colleges and universities?

	Allows district run programs	Allows non-profit providers	Allows colleges and universities only
Alabama	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Alaska ¹	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arizona	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arkansas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
California	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Colorado	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Connecticut	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delaware	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
District of Columbia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Florida	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Georgia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Idaho	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indiana	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Iowa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Kansas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Kentucky	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Louisiana	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Massachusetts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Michigan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Minnesota	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mississippi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Missouri	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ²
Montana	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Nebraska	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Nevada	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
New Hampshire	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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New Mexico	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
New York	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
North Carolina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
North Dakota ³	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ohio	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Oklahoma	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oregon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pennsylvania	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ²
Rhode Island	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
South Carolina	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ²
South Dakota	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tennessee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Texas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Utah	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vermont	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Virginia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Washington	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
West Virginia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wisconsin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wyoming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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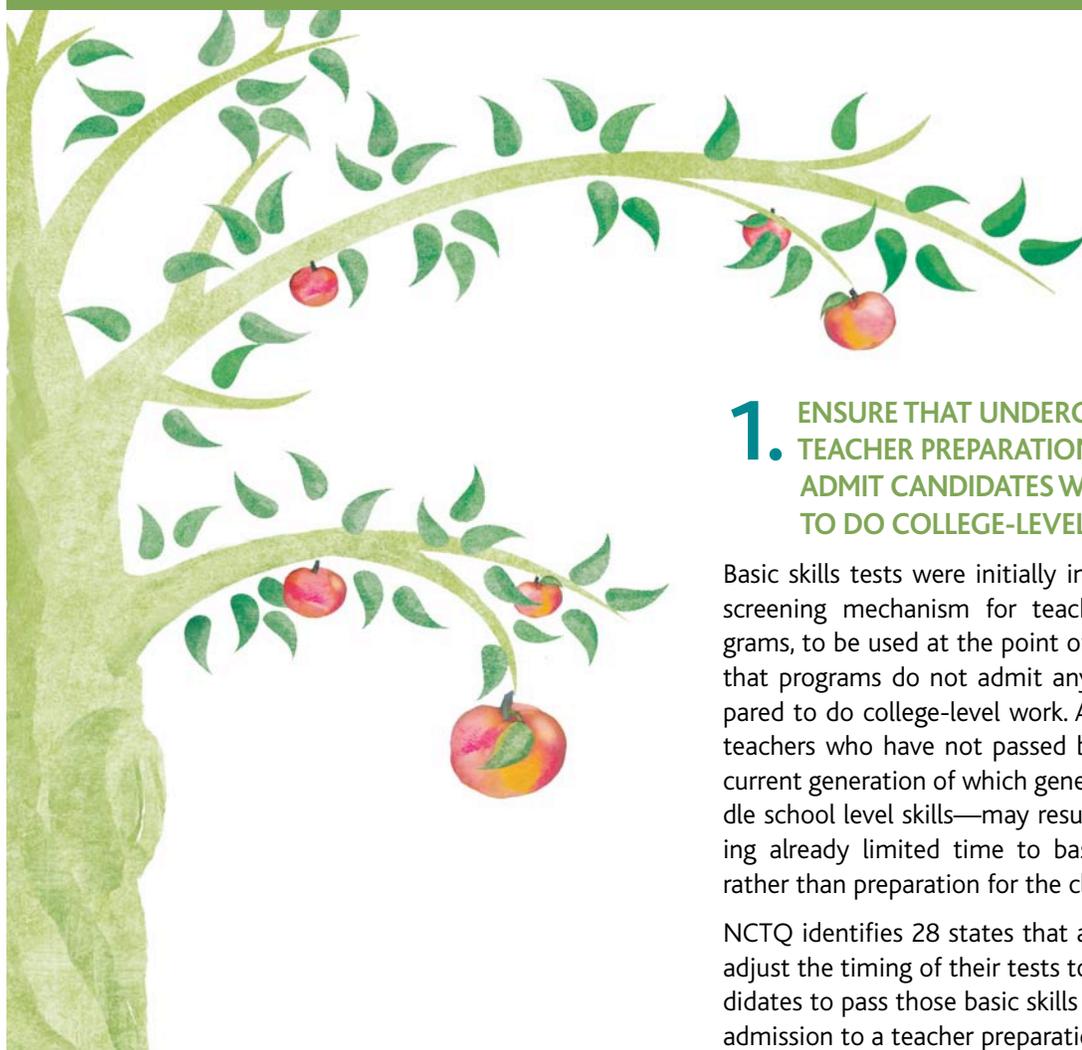
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Low-Hanging Fruit

While the Critical Attention Areas section identifies states' most urgent priorities, in fashioning a *Blueprint* for state reform, NCTQ didn't want to overlook the policy opportunities available to states where some relatively easy adjustments would lead to real improvements in state teacher policy.

We refer to these areas as "low-hanging fruit," and a general summary of these recommendations follows. It is important to remember that some of these policies can only be recommended to states with good policy foundations already in place. For example, states must have requirements for new teacher evaluations in place in order for a recommendation that the first evaluation occurs early in the year to be a low-hanging fruit. In other cases, states *not mentioned* with regard to a particular recommendation may have the stronger policy foundation. For example, only states that allow waivers of state licensing exams for out-of-state teachers can get a recommendation to cease and desist this practice as a low-hanging fruit. States that prohibit such practices are in no need of such advice.



1. ENSURE THAT UNDERGRADUATE TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS ADMIT CANDIDATES WHO ARE PREPARED TO DO COLLEGE-LEVEL WORK:

Basic skills tests were initially intended as a minimal screening mechanism for teacher preparation programs, to be used at the point of admission to ensure that programs do not admit anyone who is not prepared to do college-level work. Admitting prospective teachers who have not passed basic skills tests—the current generation of which generally assess only middle school level skills—may result in programs devoting already limited time to basic skills remediation rather than preparation for the classroom.

NCTQ identifies 28 states that are well positioned to adjust the timing of their tests to require teacher candidates to pass those basic skills test as a condition of admission to a teacher preparation program.

2. ENSURE THAT SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS ARE ADEQUATELY PREPARED TO TEACH SUBJECT MATTER:

To allow special education students the opportunity to reach their academic potential, special education teachers should be well trained in subject matter. NCTQ recommends to 35 states that, as a first step toward ensuring requisite content knowledge, they should require that elementary special education candidates pass the same Praxis II exam or other state exams required for any other elementary teachers.

At the secondary level, NCTQ recommends to 16 states that they ensure that secondary special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach multiple subjects by requiring that teacher preparation programs graduate secondary special education teacher candidates who are highly qualified in at least two subjects. The most efficient way to accomplish this objective is to require that teacher candidates earn the equivalent of two subject-area minors and pass tests in those areas. For states already requiring that graduates are highly qualified in one area, adding a second is low-hanging fruit.

3. INFORM THE PUBLIC ABOUT TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM QUALITY:

There are 28 states well poised to do more to publish data on teacher preparation programs. While most of these states have a long way to go to collect meaningful and consequential data, there are data—such as passing rates on state licensing tests quantified by individual teacher preparation programs—that states are already required to collect and report to the federal government on the quality of their teacher preparation institutions. At a minimum, states should make that information available to the public while working to collect more comprehensive data. This information would be an incentive for improvement as well as a service to prospective teachers.

In addition, there are a group of states with a separate low-hanging fruit related to teacher preparation program accountability. Six states would do well to codify the strong accountability proposals in their Race to the Top proposals so that they do not expire at the end of the grant period.

4. ENSURE THAT OUT-OF-STATE TEACHERS MEET THE STATE'S TESTING REQUIREMENTS:

While it is important not to create unnecessary obstacles for teachers seeking reciprocal licensure in a new state, testing requirements can provide an important safeguard. Particularly given the variance of the passing scores required on licensure tests, states must not assume that a teacher who passed another state's test would meet its passing score as well. NCTQ recommends to 33 states that they take steps to uphold their standards for all teachers and insist that out-of-state teachers meet their own licensure test requirements. These states waive their licensing test requirements for out-of-state teachers with a number of years of teaching experience or for teachers who have passed licensing tests in other states. A state should not provide any waivers of its content tests unless an applicant can provide evidence of a passing score under the state's own standards. The negative impact on student learning stemming from a teacher's inadequate subject-matter knowledge is not mitigated by the teacher's recent experience.

5. REQUIRE NEW-TEACHER EVALUATIONS TO OCCUR EARLY IN THE YEAR:

Clearly, this recommendation is only low-hanging fruit for those states that actually require at least one annual evaluation for all new teachers—and don't already require that the first one happens early in the school year (see Figure 6). As a result, in the *Blueprints*, NCTQ recommends to nine states that they should

explicitly require a new-teacher evaluation to be conducted during the first half of the school year. Such a policy allows new teachers to receive immediate feedback, as well as get the support they need sooner rather than later, especially for those who may be struggling. A plan for improvement can then be implemented, rather than potentially allowing an ineffective new teacher to remain in the classroom without any evaluation or support until late in the year.

6. REPORT SCHOOL-LEVEL DATA ON THE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF TEACHERS:

In order to promote the equitable distribution of teacher talent among schools within districts, data about teachers should be reported at the individual school level. NCTQ recommends to the 19 states that currently only publicly report data such as the percentage of highly qualified teachers in high- and low-poverty schools or high- and low-minority schools at the state and district levels, to also publicly report that information at the school level.

7. ENSURE THAT STRUGGLING TEACHERS RECEIVE SUPPORT:

NCTQ recommends to 25 states that they adopt policies whereby all teachers who receive a single unsatisfactory evaluation are placed on a structured improvement plan, regardless of whether or not they have tenure. These plans should focus on performance areas that directly connect to student learning and should list noted deficiencies, define specific action steps necessary to address these deficiencies, and describe how and when progress will be measured. Consequences for continued poor performance should also be articulated.

8. STRENGTHEN THE SELECTIVITY OF ALTERNATE ROUTES:

In the case of 26 states, NCTQ recommends steps they could take to strengthen the selectivity of their alternate route programs. Alternate routes to certification programs should be selective in whom they admit by requiring a GPA that is higher than what is generally expected of teacher candidates in traditional preparation programs. Common requirements such as a minimum 2.5 GPA or even a 2.0 GPA are not sufficient indicators of selectivity. States should raise their minimum GPA requirements to at least 2.75 for alternate route candidates, making accommodations as appropriate for career changers with relevant work experience. In addition, states like Oklahoma should reconsider requiring that alternate route candidates have three years of work experience after receiving a bachelor's degree—a requirement that rules out talented recent graduates from applying to teach through alternate route programs. Some states can improve their selectivity by consistently requiring all alternate route candidates to pass subject-matter tests as a condition of admission.

Section 3: Systemic Issues

Across all of the state *Blueprints*, NCTQ highlights three prominent systemic problems that are in need of serious attention. These are longer-term issues that may not always be on the front burner, but are critical to a state's overall reform agenda.

1. Performance Management

The critical relationship between teacher quality and student achievement has been well established, and ensuring that all students have teachers with the knowledge and skills to support their academic success has become a national priority. Yet the policy framework that governs the teaching profession in most states is almost entirely disconnected from teacher effectiveness. Although states largely control how teachers are evaluated, licensed and compensated, teacher effectiveness in terms of student learning has not been a central component in these policies.

Fortunately, this is starting to change. Fifteen states have made progress in their requirements for teacher evaluation in the last year alone.³ As evaluation ratings become more meaningful, states should plan to connect teacher evaluation to an overall system of performance management. The current siloed approach, with

virtually no connection between meaningful evidence of teacher performance and the awarding of tenure and professional licensure, needs a fundamental overhaul. These elements must not be thought of as isolated and discrete, but rather as part of a comprehensive performance system. This system should also include compensation strategies as well as new teacher support and ongoing professional development, creating a coordinated and aligned set of teacher policies.

A successful performance management system—one that gives educators the tools they need to be effective, supports their development, rewards their accomplishments and holds them accountable for results—is essential to the fundamental goal of all education reform: eliminating achievement gaps and ensuring that all students reach their highest potential.

³ Includes changes to state policies regulating the frequency of evaluations for probationary and non probationary teachers as well as requirements that teacher evaluations consider classroom effectiveness.

2. Pension Reform

State pension systems are in need of a fundamental overhaul. In an era when retirement benefits have been shrinking across industries and professions, teachers' generous pensions remain fixed. In fact, nearly all states continue to provide teachers with a defined benefit pension system, an expensive and inflexible model that neither reflects the realities of the modern workforce nor provides equitable benefits to all teachers.

The current model greatly disadvantages teachers who move from one state to another, career switchers who enter teaching and those who teach for fewer than 20 years. For these reasons alone, reform is needed. But the dubious financial health of states' pension systems makes this an area in need of urgent attention. Some systems carry high levels of unfunded liabilities, with no strategy to pay these liabilities down in a reasonable period, as defined by standard accounting practices. When funding cannot keep up with promised benefits, a new approach is clearly needed.

Systemic reform should lead to the development of a financially sustainable, equitable pension system that includes the following:

- The option of a fully portable pension system as teachers' primary pension plan, either through a defined contribution plan or a defined benefit plan that is formatted similarly to a cash balance plan⁴;
- Reasonable district and teacher contribution rates;

4 A cash balance pension plan is a benefit plan in which participants, and their employers if they choose, periodically contribute a predetermined rate to employees' individual pension accounts. These contributions grow at a guaranteed rate. Upon retirement or withdrawal, the participant may receive the full account balance in one lump sum, so long as the benefits are fully vested. (Based on Economic Research Institute, <http://www.ericdlc.com/resources/index.cfm?fuseaction=resource.glossary>)

Figure 13

- 1 The reported funding levels are based on states' own actuarial reports, which generally assume a rate of return between 7.5 and 8.25 percent. Some economists argue that these assumed rates of return are too high, and should instead be closer to four percent, which would lower the reported funding levels substantially.
- 2 Alaska has only a defined contribution pension system.

Figure 13

How well funded are state pension systems?¹

	Funding ratio	Year of last actuarial report
Alabama	74.7%	2009
Alaska ²	N/A	
Arizona	79%	2009
Arkansas	75.7%	2009
California	78.2%	2009
Colorado	67%	2009
Connecticut	70%	2008
Delaware	98.8%	2009
District of Columbia	92.2%	2009
Florida	87.1%	2009
Georgia	91.9%	2008
Hawaii	68.8%	2008
Idaho	73.7%	2009
Illinois	52.1%	2009
Indiana	48.2%	2008
Iowa	81.2%	2009
Kansas	58.8%	2008
Kentucky	63.6%	2009
Louisiana	59.1%	2009
Maine	74%	2008
Maryland	66%	2009
Massachusetts	73.9%	2008
Michigan	83.6%	2008
Minnesota	77.4%	2009
Mississippi	67.3%	2009
Missouri	79.9%	2009
Montana	63.8%	2009
Nebraska	86.6%	2009
Nevada	73.4%	2009
New Hampshire	58.3%	2009
New Jersey	65%	2009
New Mexico	67.5%	2009
New York	106.6%	2008
North Carolina	99.3%	2008
North Dakota	77.7%	2009
Ohio	60%	2009
Oklahoma	49.8%	2009
Oregon	80.2%	2008
Pennsylvania ¹	86%	2008
Rhode Island	60.8%	2008
South Carolina	69.3%	2008
South Dakota	91.8%	2008
Tennessee	96.2%	2007
Texas	83.1%	2009
Utah	85.6%	2009
Vermont	65.4%	2009
Virginia	84%	2008
Washington	107.9%	2008
West Virginia	41.3%	2009
Wisconsin	99.7%	2008
Wyoming	87.5%	2010

- Vesting for teachers no later than the third year of employment;
- Purchase of time in a defined benefit plan for unlimited previous teaching experience at the time of employment, as well as for all official leaves of absence, such as maternity and paternity leaves;
- The option in a defined benefit plan of a lump-sum rollover to a personal retirement account upon employment termination, which includes teacher contributions and all accrued interest at a fair interest rate;
- Funds contributed by the employer included in withdrawals due to employment termination;
- A neutral formula for determining pension benefits, regardless of years worked (eliminating any multiplier that increases with years of service or longevity bonuses)⁵; and
- Eligibility for retirement benefits based solely on age, not years of service, in order to avoid disincentives for effective teachers to continue working until conventional retirement age.

5 The formula may include years of service (i.e., years of service x final average salary x benefit multiplier), but other aspects of the benefit calculation, such as the multiplier, should not be dependent on years of service.

Figure 14

1 All calculations are based on a teacher who starts teaching at age 22, earns a starting salary of \$35,000 that increases 3 percent per year, and retires at the age when he or she is first eligible for unreduced benefits. The calculations use states' current benefit formulas and do not include cost of living increases. The final average salary was calculated as the average of the highest three years of salary, even though a few states may vary from that standard. Age 65 was used as the point of comparison for standard retirement age because it is the minimum eligibility age for unreduced Social Security benefits.

2 Alaska has only a defined contribution pension system.

Figure 14

How much do states pay for each teacher that retires with unreduced benefits at an early age?¹

Total amount paid per teacher from the time of retirement until age 65

Alabama	\$625,747
Alaska ²	N/A
Arizona	\$694,621
Arkansas	\$681,789
California	\$310,028
Colorado	\$722,108
Connecticut	\$520,009
Delaware	\$577,927
District of Columbia	\$585,737
Florida	\$557,112
Georgia	\$624,786
Hawaii	\$577,686
Idaho	\$551,743
Illinois	\$572,010
Indiana	\$317,727
Iowa	\$551,428
Kansas	\$337,385
Kentucky	\$791,678
Louisiana	\$780,982
Maine	\$258,357
Maryland	\$562,307
Massachusetts	\$594,296
Michigan	\$289,187
Minnesota	\$0
Mississippi	\$621,860
Missouri	\$676,579
Montana	\$600,767
Nebraska	\$577,686
Nevada	\$780,982
New Hampshire	\$321,325
New Jersey	\$215,301
New Mexico	\$734,123
New York	\$468,926
North Carolina	\$568,555
North Dakota	\$551,743
Ohio	\$687,264
Oklahoma	\$551,743
Oregon	\$361,536
Pennsylvania	\$650,011
Rhode Island	\$259,164
South Carolina	\$577,142
South Dakota	\$449,151
Tennessee	\$499,972
Texas	\$443,420
Utah	\$624,786
Vermont	\$486,832
Virginia	\$460,705
Washington	\$0
West Virginia	\$577,686
Wisconsin	\$416,007
Wyoming	\$655,506

3. Certification of Special Education Teachers

States' requirements for the preparation of special education teachers are one of the most neglected and dysfunctional areas of teacher policy. The low expectations for what special education teachers should know stand in stark contradiction to state and federal expectations that special education students should meet the same high standards as other students.

Most states set an exceedingly low bar for the content knowledge that special education teachers must have. But the problem requires a more systemic fix than just raising content requirements for elementary and secondary special education teachers. The overarching issue is that too many states make no distinction between elementary and secondary special education teachers, certifying all such teachers under a generic K-12 special education license. While this broad umbrella may be appropriate for teachers of

low-incidence special education students, such as those with severe cognitive disabilities, it is deeply problematic for high-incidence special education students, who are expected to learn grade-level content. And because the overwhelming majority of special education students are in the high-incidence category, the result is a fundamentally broken system.

It is virtually impossible and certainly impractical for states to ensure that a K-12 teacher knows all the subject matter he or she is expected to be able to teach. And the issue is just as valid in terms of pedagogical knowledge. Teacher preparation and licensure for special education teachers must distinguish between elementary and secondary levels, as they do for general education. The current model does little to protect some of our most vulnerable students.

Figure 15

Do states distinguish between elementary and secondary special education teachers?

	Offers only a K-12 certification	Offers K-12 and grade-specific certification(s)	Does not offer a K-12 certification
Alabama	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Alaska	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arizona	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arkansas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
California	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Colorado	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Connecticut	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delaware	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
District of Columbia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Florida	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Georgia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hawaii	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Idaho	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Illinois	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indiana	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Iowa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Kansas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kentucky	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Louisiana	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maryland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Massachusetts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Michigan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minnesota	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mississippi	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Missouri	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Montana	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nebraska	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nevada	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New Hampshire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New Jersey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New Mexico	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New York	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
North Carolina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
North Dakota	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ohio	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oklahoma	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oregon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pennsylvania ¹	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rhode Island	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
South Carolina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
South Dakota	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tennessee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Texas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Utah	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vermont	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Virginia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Washington	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
West Virginia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wisconsin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wyoming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	22	17	12

1 New policy goes into effect January 1, 2013.

CRITICAL ATTENTION AREAS

Policies that need to better connect to teacher effectiveness

Policies that fail to ensure that teachers are well prepared

Policies that license teachers who may lack subject-matter knowledge

Total Critical Attention Areas assigned

Ensure that teacher evaluations assess classroom effectiveness

Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness

Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely

Ensure that elementary teachers reading

Ensure that elementary teachers content math

Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers

Hold teacher preparation institutions accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce

Close licensure loopholes that teachers know the content they teach

Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess each subject

Massachusetts	3	■	■	■	□	□	□	□	□	□
Colorado	5	□	□	□	■	■	■	□	□	■
Florida	5	□	■	■	□	■	□	□	■	■
Delaware	6	□	□	■	■	■	□	□	■	■
District of Columbia	6	■	□	□	■	■	□	■	□	■
Louisiana	6	□	■	■	■	■	□	□	■	■
Oklahoma	6	□	□	□	□	■	■	■	■	■
Rhode Island	6	□	□	□	■	■	■	□	■	■
Tennessee	6	□	■	■	□	■	□	□	■	■
Virginia	6	■	■	■	□	■	□	■	□	■
Arkansas	7	■	■	■	■	■	□	■	□	■
Connecticut	7	■	■	■	□	■	□	■	□	■
Georgia	7	■	■	■	■	■	□	□	□	■
Maryland	7	■	■	■	■	■	□	□	■	■
New York	7	■	■	□	■	■	□	■	■	■
South Carolina	7	□	■	■	■	■	□	□	□	■
Texas	7	□	■	■	■	■	□	□	■	■
Alabama	8	■	■	■	■	■	□	□	□	■
Illinois	8	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	□	■
Kentucky	8	■	■	■	■	■	□	□	■	■
Mississippi	8	■	■	■	■	■	□	■	□	■
New Jersey	8	■	■	■	■	■	□	□	□	■
North Carolina	8	■	■	■	■	■	□	□	■	■
Ohio	8	■	■	■	■	■	□	□	□	■
California	9	■	■	■	□	■	■	■	■	■
Hawaii	9	■	■	■	■	■	□	□	■	■
Michigan	9	■	■	■	■	■	■	□	■	■
Minnesota	9	■	■	■	□	□	■	■	■	■
Missouri	9	■	■	■	■	■	□	□	■	■
Nevada	9	■	■	■	■	■	■	□	□	■
North Dakota	9	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	□	■
Washington	9	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
West Virginia	9	■	■	■	■	■	□	■	□	■
Indiana	10	■	■	■	■	■	□	■	■	■
Iowa	10	■	■	■	■	■	□	■	■	■
Kansas	10	■	■	■	■	■	□	■	■	■
New Hampshire	10	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
New Mexico	10	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	□	■
Pennsylvania	10	■	■	■	■	■	□	■	■	■
South Dakota	10	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Utah	10	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Vermont	10	■	■	■	■	■	□	■	■	■
Wisconsin	10	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Wyoming	10	■	■	■	■	■	□	■	■	■
Alaska	11	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Arizona	11	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Idaho	11	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Maine	11	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Montana	11	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Nebraska	11	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Oregon	11	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

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Summary of Blueprint for Change in Alabama

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **C-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ **Teacher Evaluation:** The state has replaced its PEPE teacher evaluation system with the new EDUCATEAlabama system. Under EDUCATEAlabama, every teacher is observed at least twice, and both observations are unannounced. One observation must occur in the fall (October-mid December), and the other must occur in the spring (late January-March). A post-observation conference follows each formal classroom observation. <http://www.educatealabama.net/>

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Alabama as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route usage and providers.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.
- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.
- Update testing requirements for new teachers.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Alaska

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ No recent policy changes were identified.

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Alaska as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary math content.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Ensure that alternate route candidates have sufficient content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route usage and providers.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Arizona

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D+**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

- **Teacher Evaluation:** New legislation requires the use of an evaluation framework that includes quantitative data on student academic progress that accounts for between 33 percent and 50 percent of outcomes. By school year 2012-2013, districts must use this instrument for annual evaluations of all teachers. Teachers who are rated as inadequate now have 60 days to improve rather than 85. *Arizona Revised Statute 15-203, amended H.B. 2011*
- **Tenure:** Districts are now prohibited from using tenure as a factor in teacher layoffs, and they no longer have to consider tenure when they rehire. Also, if salary reductions are necessary, districts may reduce the salaries of some tenured teachers and not others. *H.B. 2011*
- **Teacher Dismissal:** Teachers dismissed for cause now have only 10 days to request a hearing rather than 30. *H.B. 2011*
- **Alternative Certification:** Arizona now requires that alternate route candidates complete 45 classroom hours or three credit hours of training in research-based systematic phonics instruction. *H.B. 2298*

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Arizona as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route usage.

Arizona Summary continued

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Evaluate new teachers early in the year.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Arkansas

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **C-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ No recent policy changes were identified.

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Arkansas as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Evaluate new teachers early in the year.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in California

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D+**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

- **State Data System:** The state eliminated its prohibition against using data from the state data system for the purpose of teacher evaluations. In addition, such data can also now be used to evaluate teacher preparation programs. www.dataqualitycampaign.org; *Senate Bill X5 1*
- **Alternative Certification:** California now allows community-based organizations and nongovernmental organizations to be providers of alternate routes. *Senate Bill X5 1*

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for California as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Colorado

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D+**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

- **Teacher Evaluation:** Colorado now requires annual evaluations for all teachers. Probationary teachers must receive at least two documented observations that result in a written evaluation report each academic year. Beginning with the 2012-2013 school year, nonprobationary teachers must receive a written evaluation each academic year. Beginning in the fall of 2013, teachers will be rated "highly effective," "effective" or "ineffective." Fifty percent of a teacher's evaluation will be based on students' academic growth as measured partially by test scores. *S.B. 10-191*
- **Tenure:** Probationary teachers must earn three consecutive "effective" ratings to become nonprobationary. Veteran, or nonprobationary, teachers who receive two consecutive "ineffective" ratings return to probationary status and have a year to improve or face termination. *S.B. 10-191*
- **Teacher Preparation Program Accountability:** Beginning in 2011, the state must annually report on the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs using aggregate data, including the correlation among different preparation programs and student academic growth, educator placement, and educator mobility and retention. *S.B. 10-036*

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Colorado as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Connecticut

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D+**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ **Teacher Evaluation:** The state's newly adopted teacher evaluation procedures call for the use of "multiple indicators" of performance, including multiple indicators of student academic growth, as well as consideration of factors such as attendance, class size and student mobility. It does not include changes in frequency or timing of evaluations. *S.B. 438*

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Connecticut as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Broaden alternate route usage and providers.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Delaware

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

- **Teacher Evaluation:** Delaware now requires a uniform teacher evaluation based on student achievement, and these evaluations will be considered in making decisions about tenure, teacher pay and promotions. New teachers must receive a minimum of two announced observations and one unannounced observation, resulting in a summative evaluation rating every year. Those who receive a rating of "needs improvement" or "ineffective" must have an improvement plan that may require additional observations. Experienced teachers who earn a rating of "highly effective" on their most recent summative evaluation must receive a minimum of one announced observation each year with a summative evaluation at least once every two years. However, the "student improvement" component must be evaluated every year, and teachers cannot be rated "effective" unless they have met growth targets. *Delaware Administrative Code 14.106A*
- **Tenure:** The state now requires that teachers must show two years of satisfactory student growth (evidenced by satisfactory ratings in the "student improvement" component of the teacher appraisal process) within a three-year period before they receive tenure. *S.B. 263*

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Delaware as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Strengthen teacher preparation program accountability.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.
- Require subject-matter test as condition of admission to alternate route.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in District of Columbia

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ **Teacher Evaluation:** Although not state-level policy, the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) has implemented a new teacher evaluation system called IMPACT, in which 50 percent of the evaluation score is based on the teacher's impact on students' achievement.

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for the District of Columbia as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Ensure that alternate route candidates have sufficient content knowledge.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Florida

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **C**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ No recent policy changes were identified.

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Florida as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Georgia

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **C-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ No recent policy changes were identified.

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Georgia as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Ensure that alternate route candidates have sufficient content knowledge.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Strengthen teacher preparation program accountability.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Hawaii

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ No recent policy changes were identified.

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Hawaii as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Ensure that alternate route candidates have sufficient content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route usage and providers.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Strengthen teacher preparation program accountability.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Idaho

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

- **Teacher Evaluation:** Idaho now requires districts to adopt or develop a teacher evaluation model aligned to minimum standards that are based on the Danielson Framework for Teaching domains and components of instruction. The state's timeline includes 1) districts work with educational stakeholders to develop evaluation models for the 2009-2010 school year; 2) districts begin piloting evaluations in fall 2010; and 3) full implementation, by fall 2011, of teacher evaluation models. <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/teacherEval/implementationGuidelines.htm>
- **Teacher Preparation to Teach Reading:** The state has deleted the section of its code requiring that teachers be specifically trained in the science of reading (i.e., phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension). Instead the code reads: "The higher education institutions shall be responsible for the preservice assessment measure for all kindergarten through grade twelve (12) teacher preparation programs. The assessment must include a demonstration of teaching skills and knowledge congruent with current research on best reading practices." Idaho also now requires that all teachers working on interim certificates, alternate routes or coming from out of state must complete a state-approved reading instruction course for full certification. *HB 637 amends section 33-1207A of the Idaho Code.*

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Idaho as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route usage and providers.

Idaho Summary continued

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Illinois

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D+**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

- **Teacher Evaluation:** The state now requires that the use of data and indicators of student growth be “significant” factors in teacher evaluations, and teachers must be rated as: “excellent,” “proficient,” “needs improvement” or “unsatisfactory.” Illinois has stipulated that if a district’s committee cannot reach an agreement within 180 days, then the district must implement the state’s model evaluation plan, which requires student growth to account for 50 percent of the performance rating. Illinois has also articulated that if a district with 500,000 or more inhabitants cannot agree within 90 days, it is not required to implement the model evaluation plan but may instead implement its last “best proposal.” In addition, the state now requires that probationary teachers be evaluated once every school year and that nonprobationary teachers be evaluated at least once every two years. However, any teacher in contractual continued service whose performance is rated as either “needs improvement” or “unsatisfactory” must be evaluated at least once in the school year following the receipt of such rating. *S.B. 315*
- **Teacher Licensure:** Beginning February 1, 2012, all secondary teachers who wish to add an endorsement must now pass a content test, and of the 24 required credit hours, half must be upper-division classes. Science and social studies endorsement requirements remain unchanged and still require 32 credit hours as well as a content test. As of January 1, 2010, no teacher candidate may attempt to pass the same licensure test more than five times. *23 IAC 25.100 (b)(3) 23 IAC 25.720 (h)*
- **Teacher Preparation Program Accountability:** Each accredited education school must annually submit a report that provides data that describe the results of unit and program assessments and the actions taken or planned to address areas identified for improvement. The report must also contain summary data about the program’s overall structure, faculty and candidates and the results of various assessments. If applicable, schools must also report on all programs that have been approved as alternate routes to certification. *23 IAC 25.115 (e)*
- **Basic Skills Scores:** Illinois has raised the minimum passing scores on the basic skills test, beginning in September 2010, but the state has yet to publish the new requirements.
- **Alternative Route Providers:** The state has broadened the providers of its alternate route to include non-profit organizations, no longer requiring such providers to partner with an institution of higher education. *Public Act 096-0862*

Illinois Summary continued

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Illinois as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Indiana

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

- **Admission to Teacher Preparation:** Indiana now requires aspiring teachers to demonstrate basic skills (Praxis I) as a criterion for admission to teacher education programs. *515 IAC 3-1-1*
- **Licensure Advancement:** Indiana has eliminated the portfolio/mentoring program required for new teachers to advance from an initial license to a professional license. New teachers must instead complete a Beginning Teacher Residency program in which building level administrators assess a new teacher's effectiveness and develop plans for professional improvement. *515 IAC 1-5-3*
- **Secondary Teacher Preparation:** Secondary teachers (5-12) must now major in an applicable content area and minor in education. *515 IAC 8-1-1.6*
- **Elementary Teacher Preparation:** Elementary teachers (K-6) must now either major in a content area and minor in education or minor in a content area and major in education. In addition, Indiana has drafted new teacher content standards that now require its teacher preparation programs to provide teacher candidates with training in the science of reading. The new standards also outline in greater detail mathematics content geared to the specific needs of elementary teachers. *515 IAC 8-1-1.4*

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Indiana as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route providers.

Indiana Summary continued

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.
- Require subject-matter test as condition of admission to alternate route.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Iowa

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ No recent policy changes were identified.

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Iowa as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route usage and providers.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Kansas

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ No recent policy changes were identified.

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Kansas as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route usage and providers.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.
- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Kentucky

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D+**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ **Alternative Certification:** The state has added Teach For America (TFA) as a pilot alternative certification program option. TFA candidates are issued a one-year provisional certificate if they have an offer of employment, have a bachelor's degree, complete TFA training and pass content-knowledge tests in the specific teaching field. Certificates may be renewed two times. Upon second renewal, candidates may participate in internship programs and, upon successful completion of programs and assessments relating to teaching of subject matter, will be issued professional certificates. *KRS 161.048 amended*

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Kentucky as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.
- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Louisiana

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **C-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ **Teacher Evaluation:** All teachers must now be evaluated annually. In addition, student academic growth must count for 50 percent of a teacher's evaluation. The state's value-added formula relies entirely on whether students meet predicted outcomes on state assessments. Teachers who receive an "ineffective" rating three or more times during a certification cycle will not be recertified. *Act 54*

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Louisiana as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Strengthen the selectivity of alternate route programs.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Maine

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **F**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ **Teacher Evaluation:** Maine has removed its data firewall and now allows student test results to be used in teacher evaluations. However, if school districts want to include student assessments as part of teacher evaluations, they must use one of the models developed at the state level. *L.D. 1799*

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Maine as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route usage and providers.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Maryland

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

- **Teacher Evaluation:** According to the Education Reform Act of 2010, student growth must account for a significant portion of a teacher's performance evaluation and must be one of the multiple measures used. No single criterion is allowed to count for more than 35 percent of the total performance evaluation. Draft regulations by the State Board of Education limit any single component of student growth, such as standardized test scores, to 35 percent, but other measures of student progress are added for a total of 50 percent. Although a legislative committee has recommended that the state reject student growth counting for half of teacher evaluations, the State Board seems on track to finalize the regulations. *H.B. 1263*
- **Tenure:** The probationary period before teachers are awarded tenure has been extended from two to three years. *Annotated Code of Maryland 6-202(b)(1)*
- **State Data System:** Maryland now has a unique statewide student identifier that connects student data across key databases across years. The state also has the ability to match individual students' test records from year to year to measure academic growth, and it now assigns unique teacher identifiers. www.dataqualitycampaign.org

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Maryland as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.

Maryland Summary continued

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Strengthen teacher preparation program accountability.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Massachusetts

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D+**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ **Teacher Dismissal:** In a school deemed chronically low performing, a nonprobationary teacher can be dismissed for “good cause” so long as the teacher is given written notice five days prior to the dismissal. The teacher has the right to appeal. *SB 2247*

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Massachusetts as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Strengthen teacher preparation program accountability.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Michigan

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

- **Teacher Evaluation:** Michigan now requires annual evaluations for all teachers. Evaluations must use multiple rating categories and take into account student growth—measured by national, state or local assessments and other objective criteria—as a significant factor. *S.B. 981*
- **Tenure:** Evaluations are used to make decisions about tenure, using “rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent and fair procedures.” Both tenured and nontenured teachers who are ineffective may be removed after they have had “ample opportunities to improve.” *S.B. 981*
- **Alternative Certification:** The state now allows alternate route candidates to teach under its interim teaching certificate if the program provides intensive training that constitutes the equivalent of at least 12 credit hours and includes the following: child development or child psychology, family and community relationships, diverse learners, instructional strategies and a form of field-based experience in a classroom setting. The program must also only accept participants who hold a bachelor’s, master’s, doctorate or professional degree from an accredited college or university with at least a 3.0 grade point average. Participants must also pass both the basic skills examination and appropriate subject-area exams for each subject area of certification. The state no longer requires a major or subject area coursework in the subject the candidate wishes to teach. *H.B. 5596 (2009), Public Act 202 of 2009*
- **Teacher Pensions:** Michigan now enrolls new teachers in a hybrid pension plan with both a defined benefit component and a new defined contribution component. Teachers now contribute two percent (out of an overall contribution of 11.4 percent) of their salaries to the defined contribution component. Employers contribute a 50 percent match up to one percent of employee salaries; however, teachers are not vested in this contribution until after four years of teaching. In addition, years of service are no longer a factor in determining eligibility for retirement benefits. <http://www.mipensionplus.org/>

Michigan Summary continued

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Michigan as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Broaden alternate route providers.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Minnesota

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

- **Science of Reading Assessment:** The state now requires that all new elementary teachers pass the Teacher Licensure Examination (MTLE) elementary education content test, which includes the equivalent of a stand-alone science of reading assessment. http://www.mtle.nesinc.com/TestView.aspx?f=HTML_FRAG/MN024_SG_SUB1.html
- **Elementary Math Assessment:** The state's new certification test also includes a separate subtest in which mathematics accounts for 75 percent of the exam questions. Teacher candidates must pass each subtest to earn a passing score on the overall assessment. http://www.mtle.nesinc.com/TestView.aspx?f=HTML_FRAG/MN024_SG_SUB1.html

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Minnesota as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route providers.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Evaluate new teachers early in the year.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.
- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Mississippi

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D+**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ No recent policy changes were identified.

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Mississippi as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Broaden alternate route usage.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.
- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Missouri

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ No recent policy changes were identified.

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Missouri as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route usage and providers.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Evaluate new teachers early in the year.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.
- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Montana

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **F**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ No recent policy changes were identified.

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Montana as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route usage and providers.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.
- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Nebraska

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ **Compensation:** The state has provided for the establishment of teacher performance pay beginning with the 2016-2017 school year subject to collective-bargaining agreements. *L.B. 1014*

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Nebraska as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route usage and providers.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Nevada

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ **Teacher Evaluation:** Nevada lifted its teacher-student data firewall, which prevented the use of achievement data in teacher evaluations. However, test scores cannot be the sole criterion for evaluating teachers. *S.B. 2*

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Nevada as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route usage and providers.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in New Hampshire

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ **State Data Systems:** New Hampshire added "pupil course information" to the list of data elements that are to be submitted by schools to the state. This additional element will provide the data necessary to link student performance to individual teachers. *Senate Bill 503, New Hampshire Revised Statutes 193-E:3, 1(i)*

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for New Hampshire as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.
- Require subject-matter test as condition of admission to alternate route.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in New Jersey

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D+**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ **Licensure Reciprocity:** New Jersey added a provision that allows out-of-state teachers to be eligible for a standard certificate with an endorsement equivalent to their out-of-state certificate if they: 1) completed at least three years of teaching in good standing during the previous seven years; 2) passed a content test that was required for the out-of-state certificate; and 3) possess a valid, regular, standard certificate from any state. *N.J.A.C. 6A:9-8.8(h)*

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for New Jersey as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route providers.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in New Mexico

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D+**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

- **Teacher Preparation to Teach Reading:** New Mexico has directed the state's education schools to form a work group to examine the curricula and assigned materials of all required reading courses in teacher preparation programs, and then determine if they meet the statutory requirement that they be based on current scientifically based research. *HJM 16*
- **Teacher Preparation to Teach Mathematics:** New Mexico has increased its requirement of six credit hours in mathematics for elementary teacher candidates to nine credit hours. Secondary teachers still are only required to complete six credit hours. *HB 322*

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for New Mexico as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route providers.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in New York

■ 2009 Overall Grade: D+

■ 2010 Policy Update:

- **Teacher Evaluation:** The state's evaluation system now includes measures of student achievement. Evaluations will be required to base 40 percent of the composite effectiveness score on student achievement measures. Prior to the approved use of a value-added model, this percentage will be comprised of 20 percent student growth based on state assessments and 20 percent based on locally selected measures of student achievement. Once the value-added model is implemented, 25 percent will be based on state assessments, and the remaining 15 percent will be based on the locally selected measures. The new system also requires the following rating categories: "highly effective," "effective," "developing" and "ineffective," with explicit minimum and maximum scoring ranges for each category. *Chapter 103 (S.7991/A.11171)*
- **Teacher Dismissal:** New York also provides for expedited hearings before a single hearing officer to dismiss teachers who have a pattern of ineffective performance. This pattern of ineffective performance is defined as two consecutive annual ratings of "ineffective." *Chapter 103 (S.7991/A.11171)*
- **Alternate Route Providers:** The state has broadened the providers of its alternate route to include nonprofit organizations. *Amended Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, Part 52.21*

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for New York as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Strengthen teacher preparation program accountability.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in North Carolina

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D+**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ No recent policy changes were identified.

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for North Carolina as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Ensure that alternate route candidates have sufficient content knowledge.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.
- Evaluate new teachers early in the year.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in North Dakota

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ No recent policy changes were identified.

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for North Dakota as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide an alternate route to certification.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Ohio

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D+**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ No recent policy changes were identified.

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Ohio as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route usage and providers.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.
- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Oklahoma

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D+**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ **Teacher Evaluation:** Recent legislation has established a teacher evaluation system that bases 35 percent of a teacher's score on student academic growth using multiple years of standardized test data, and an additional 15 percent on other academic measurements. Teachers will be evaluated at least once a year and scored as "superior," "highly effective," "effective," "needs improvement" or "ineffective." Tenured teachers rated "ineffective" for two consecutive years will be terminated; those rated as "needs improvement" for three years will be terminated; and those who do not average at least an "effective" rating over a five-year period will be terminated. *S.B. 2033*

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Oklahoma as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Broaden alternate route usage.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.
- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Oregon

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ No recent policy changes were identified.

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Oregon as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle-school teachers.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Ensure that alternate route candidates have sufficient content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route usage and providers.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Require subject-matter test as condition of admission to alternate route.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Pennsylvania

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

- No recent policy changes were identified.

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Pennsylvania as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route providers.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Evaluate new teachers early in the year.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Rhode Island

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

- **Teacher Evaluation:** The Board of Regents approved a set of evaluation standards, thus allowing the state to develop a model evaluation system, which will be ready to use by 2011. All teachers must be evaluated at least annually, with 51 percent of that evaluation based on student growth and achievement. Teachers will receive one of four ratings: "highly effective," "effective," "minimally effective" and "ineffective." Teachers who receive two years of ineffective evaluations will be dismissed. Any teacher with five years of ineffective ratings would not be eligible to have his or her certification renewed by the state. <http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/default.aspx>
- **Tenure:** Districts may no longer make teacher assignments that are based solely on seniority. *Commissioner's Memo, October 20, 2009*

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Rhode Island as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle-school teachers.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in South Carolina

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **C-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ No recent policy changes were identified.

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for South Carolina as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route usage and providers.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in South Dakota

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ **Teacher Evaluation:** Teachers in their first three years now receive annual evaluations, while teachers with four or more years experience will be evaluated every other year. Also, by July 1, 2011, South Dakota will have established minimum professional performance standards for certified teachers. *S.B. 24*

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for South Dakota as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle-school teachers.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.
- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Tennessee

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **C-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

- **Teacher Evaluation:** The state now requires that all teachers be evaluated annually. Also, 50 percent of the evaluation must be based on student achievement data. Thirty-five percent of a teacher's yearly evaluation must rely on student growth data from the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS). The remaining 15 percent must be based on other measures of student achievement. *Chapter 2 of the Public Acts of 2010*
- **Teacher Dismissal:** The state now allows all tenured teachers who receive a notice of dismissal (not just those in Nashville and Memphis) to have the right to demand a hearing on the charges before an impartial hearing officer selected by the local board. *Chapter 2 of the Public Acts of 2010*
- **Compensation:** Tennessee now allows districts to submit their own proposed salary schedules for approval by the commissioner, as opposed to its former requirement that all districts use the state-formulated schedule based on training and experience factors. *Chapter 2 of the Public Acts of 2010*

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Tennessee as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Ensure that alternate route candidates have sufficient content knowledge.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Evaluate new teachers early in the year.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.
- Require subject-matter test as condition of admission to alternate route.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Texas

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **C-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ **Special Education:** Texas now requires that special education teachers demonstrate content mastery of each subject to be taught. Elementary special education teachers must pass “the appropriate certification examination” in addition to the special education assessment. Secondary special education teachers are required to pass “the appropriate content area certification examination” or complete a major or its equivalent comprised of at least 24 semester hours, including 12 semester hours of upper-division coursework in the subject taught. *Texas Administrative Code, Rule 232.4*

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Texas as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Ensure that alternate route candidates have sufficient content knowledge.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Utah

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ **Teacher Pension:** The defined benefit plans of the Utah State Retirement System will not be available to teachers hired after July 1, 2011. New teachers will have a choice between a defined contribution plan and a hybrid plan, which includes a defined benefit and may contain a defined contribution component, depending on plan costs. *Chapter 266, Laws of 2010, SB 63*

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Utah as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Evaluate new teachers early in the year.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Vermont

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **F**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ No recent policy changes were identified.

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Vermont as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route usage and providers.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Virginia

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D+**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ **Teacher Preparation:** All primary, elementary, middle, and secondary history and social sciences teacher candidates must now complete coursework that includes local government and civics instruction specific to Virginia. *SB715 Chapter 814*

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Virginia as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that undergraduate teacher preparation programs admit candidates who are prepared to do college-level work.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Washington

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D+**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

- **Teacher Evaluation:** The state now requires that a teacher in his or her third year of provisional status must be observed at least three times, for not less than 90 minutes. After each observation, the principal provides results of each observation in writing. The new evaluation tool also employs a four-level ranking system. Washington sets minimum criteria for the evaluation, including centering instruction on high expectations for student achievement, demonstrating effective teaching practices and using multiple student data elements to modify instruction and improve student learning. When applicable student growth data is referenced in the evaluation process, it must be based on multiple measures that can include classroom-based, school-based, district-based and state-based tools. Pilot programs are being conducted for the next two years, with full implementation required by the 2013–2014 school year. *S.B. 6696*
- **Tenure:** The probationary period before teachers are eligible for tenure has been changed from two to three years. *S.B. 6696-S2.SL, sec. 203*
- **State Data System:** Washington now has the ability to match individual student records with teacher records. www.dataqualitycampaign.org
- **Pedagogy Test:** As of the 2011–2012 school year, all teacher preparation programs must administer the “evidence-based assessment of teaching effectiveness” to all preservice candidates. *S.B. 6696, sec. 501*
- **Alternative Certification:** Washington has transitioned its alternate route partnership grant program from a separate competitive grant program to a preparation program model, “to be expanded among approved preparation program providers.” The state defines its alternate routes as “partnerships between professional educator standards board-approved preparation programs, Washington school districts and other partners as appropriate.” In addition, the state now allows alternate route programs to be offered by non-higher education providers and requires that all public higher education institutions offer an alternate route program by 2011. *S.B. 6696, sec. 502-503*

■ Critical Attention Areas:

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Washington as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.

Washington Summary continued

■ Low-Hanging Fruit:

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in West Virginia

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D+**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ No recent policy changes were identified.

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for West Virginia as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route usage.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that out-of-state teachers meet the state's testing requirements.
- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Wisconsin

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ **Teacher Evaluation:** Wisconsin repealed its data firewall and now allows the use of standardized testing results in teacher evaluations. Districts that use examination results as part of their teacher evaluations must develop a plan that includes a description of the process, multiple criteria in addition to testing results, the rationale for using results to evaluate teachers and an explanation of how it plans to use the evaluations to improve pupil academic achievement. *S.B. 372*

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Wisconsin as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure adequate subject-matter preparation for middle school teachers.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.

Summary of Blueprint for Change in Wyoming

■ 2009 Overall Grade: **D-**

■ 2010 Policy Update:

■ No recent policy changes were identified.

■ **Critical Attention Areas:**

This section identifies the highest priority areas for Wyoming as it works to advance teacher quality.

- Ensure that teacher evaluations assess effectiveness in the classroom.
- Connect tenure decisions to teacher effectiveness.
- Prevent ineffective teachers from remaining in the classroom indefinitely.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know the science of reading.
- Ensure that elementary teachers know elementary content math.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs are accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.
- Close licensure loopholes to ensure that teachers know the content they teach.
- Ensure that elementary content tests adequately assess content knowledge in each subject area.
- Provide flexibility to alternate route teachers in demonstrating content knowledge.
- Broaden alternate route usage and providers.

■ **Low-Hanging Fruit:**

This section highlights areas where a small adjustment would result in significantly stronger policy.

- Ensure that special education teachers are adequately prepared to teach subject matter.
- Inform the public about teacher preparation program quality.
- Evaluate new teachers early in the year.
- Ensure that struggling teachers receive support.
- Report school-level data to support the equitable distribution of teachers.
- Strengthen selectivity of alternate route programs.



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NCTQ is available to work with individual states to improve teacher policies.

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