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Contact: Stephen Buckley
National Council on Teacher Quality
sbuckley@nctq.org
(202) 393-0020 ext. 129

**DESPITE REFORMS, MOST STATES ALLOW TEACHERS TO EARN EFFECTIVE RATINGS
EVEN WITHOUT GAINS IN STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT, SAYS NEW REPORT**

*NCTQ Discovers State Ed Agencies Allow Status Quo Teacher Evaluation Ratings to Continue;
Report Calls on States to Strengthen Evaluation Policies & Track Results*

Washington, D.C.—Since 2009, the number of states requiring school districts to incorporate evidence of student learning as at least a significant part of teacher evaluations has grown to 30 states. Despite clear legislative intent, rules or guidance in 28 of these 30 states allow a teacher to earn an overall rating of effective or higher, even if a teacher scores poorly on student learning.

The report, *Running in Place: How New Teacher Evaluations Fail to Live Up to Promises*, released today by the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ), shows how regulations and guidance from state educational agencies allow schools to continue to rate nearly all teachers effective.

Even if teachers receive the lowest possible score on their ability to increase student learning, they can still earn a rating of effective in 16 states. Two more states allow teachers who receive the second lowest score on the student growth component of their evaluation to earn an overall rating of effective or higher. Another 10 states leave scoring up to districts to determine.

“State legislators made a big deal about their changes to teacher evaluations. They claimed new laws ensure that only teachers who proved their ability to raise student achievement would be rated effective or better,” said Kate Walsh, President and Founder of NCTQ. “Unfortunately, state education agencies preserved the status quo by creating giant loopholes in the criteria for how teachers can earn an effective rating.”

Of the 30 states that require student growth to be at least a significant factor in evaluations, only two —Indiana and Kentucky—have clear policies that require teachers to meet specific goals on student learning in order to be rated effective.

In the remaining 28 states, a teacher who earns a poor score on student growth measures may be rated as effective, as long as that teacher has high scores on observations and other non-growth factors. This essentially negates any real influence of the student growth component.

“As a result, the percentage of teachers rated effective or higher has been relatively consistent,” said Elizabeth Ross, Managing Director of State Policy at NCTQ. “Despite state efforts, nearly all teachers continue to earn ratings of effective or higher, despite student test scores and

research which indicates that these ratings are unlikely to accurately reflect teachers' performance."

"Retaining the status quo prevents schools, districts, and states from reliably basing key personnel decisions on evaluation ratings," said Ross. "States should not, as a matter of policy, strive to give more teachers poor ratings; however, if all teachers are labeled effective, then schools, districts, and states cannot use evaluation results to intervene to support teachers who would benefit from more help."

An emphasis on student growth is important because evidence shows that teachers who increase students' learning positively influence students' immediate and long-term outcomes.

The report calls on states to strengthen their current evaluation policies. NCTQ suggests that states prevent teachers from earning an effective rating if they are ineffective at increasing student learning. At the very least, states should ensure that teachers cannot be rated effective if they receive the lowest possible rating on the student growth component of their evaluation.

NCTQ's report, *Running in Place*, also suggests that states have an opportunity under ESSA, the new federal education law, to carefully consider the impact of student growth in their teacher evaluation systems. As states continue their work to improve teacher quality, teacher evaluation must evolve from an exercise of compliance to a process that identifies an individual teacher's strengths and weaknesses in an effort to support continual development.

NCTQ also recommends that states track the results of the components within the evaluation framework and offer districts technical assistance where student learning measures and observation measures are significantly misaligned. Tennessee is a strong example of a state that tracks this misalignment and publishes the results.

To read the study, click [here](#). To schedule an interview with Ms. Walsh, please contact Stephen Buckley at (202) 393-0020 ext. 129.

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About the National Council on Teacher Quality:

The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) is a nonpartisan research and policy group, committed to modernizing the teaching profession and based on the belief that all children deserve effective teachers. NCTQ is the nation's expert on the quality of teacher preparation programs and evaluates national teacher education against evidence-based criteria. More information about NCTQ can be found on our website, www.nctq.org