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NATIONAL COUNCIL ON TEACHER QUALITY ANNOUNCES HEATHER PESKE AS NEXT PRESIDENT

Peske Brings Experience in Teaching, State Policymaking, and Advocating for Equity to Lead NCTQ into its Next Phase of Innovation and Growth

Washington, D.C. — The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ), a nonpartisan nonprofit research and policy organization dedicated to ensuring every child has access to effective teachers, today announced that it has named Dr. Heather Peske as its next President. Dr. Peske will step into the role effective May 2022, succeeding Kate Walsh who announced her intent to step down in September 2021 after leading NCTQ for 20 years.

Dr. Peske comes to NCTQ from her role as Senior Associate Commissioner for Instructional Support in the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MA DESE) where she implemented policies and programs across teacher development, educator preparation, and curriculum and instruction that drove historic improvements for students—including record graduation rates, the highest rating NAEP performance, and dramatic increases in higher-education participation and success.

“NCTQ has a history of focusing on teacher quality and educational excellence,” said **Tom Lasley, NCTQ Board Chair**. “Kate Walsh established that emphasis during her tenure, and Dr. Peske will be able to build on it in ways that further impact what is occurring in schools and in the preparation of the nation's next-generation teachers and educational leaders.”

Deeply committed to educational equity, Dr. Peske launched a statewide effort in Massachusetts to empower educators with the evidence-based literacy practices necessary to tackle early literacy achievement gaps and promote racial equity. She also developed the state’s first Equity Plan to ensure more equitable access to effective teachers.

“NCTQ has a track record of success in providing states and districts with the information and support necessary to catalyze and continue policies that promote teacher quality,” said **Dr. Peske**. “As we emerge from the pandemic, teacher quality has never been more critical—or more challenged. I look forward to leading NCTQ to support states, districts, and educator preparation programs to ensure all students have access to effective teachers.”

After having started her career as an elementary teacher in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Dr. Peske served as Director of Teacher Quality at The Education Trust and later as the Vice President of Programs at Teach Plus. Over her three decades in education, she has been named a “Future Chief” by Chiefs for Change (2021), a Broad Academy Fellow (2019), and a recipient of the Governor Paul Cellucci Award for Leadership and Mentoring in State Government (2017). Dr. Peske earned her master’s degree and doctorate in Administration, Planning, and Social Policy from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. She graduated with her bachelor’s degree from Kenyon College with magna cum laude honors.

“Having worked regularly with Heather since her days at Ed Trust, there is no question in my mind that she is the right person to lead NCTQ,” said **Kate Walsh**, who has served as NCTQ’s President since 2002. “Among her many tremendous qualities, I consider her to be an education warrior, very much in keeping with NCTQ’s own values, culture, and goals.”

Dr. Peske’s appointment concludes a four-month national search completed by Slesinger Management Services and led by the NCTQ Board of Directors.

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For more information or to schedule an interview, contact Nicole Gerber at (202) 393-0020 ext. 712 or ngerber@nctq.org.

About 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. We recognize that it is not teachers who bear responsibility for their profession's many challenges, but the institutions with the greatest authority and influence over teachers. More information about NCTQ can be found at www.nctq.org.*