

For Immediate Release  
November 4, 2015

Contact: Dan Glaser, [dglaser@nctq.org](mailto:dglaser@nctq.org)  
Phone 202-393-0020 x 117

## **NEW REPORT: EVALUATIONS OF EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS HAVE STRONG Foothold IN STATE POLICY**

### **Forty-two States and D.C. Require Objective Measures of Student Achievement in Teacher Evaluation; But Implementation Challenges Remain**

#### **NCTQ Report Also Provides First Look at Principal Evaluation Policy**

*NCTQ Urges States to Connect the Dots and Use Evaluation Results to Better Inform Teacher Policy and Classroom Practice*

November 4, 2015 (Washington, DC) — The National Council on Teacher Quality today released "[State of the States 2015: Evaluating Teaching, Leading and Learning](#)," which provides a lay of the land on state teacher and principal evaluation policy in 2015. The report finds that more rigorous policies are continuing to take root across the states, with 43 states requiring that student achievement and growth be included in teacher evaluations; 35 of the 43 require it to be a significant factor.

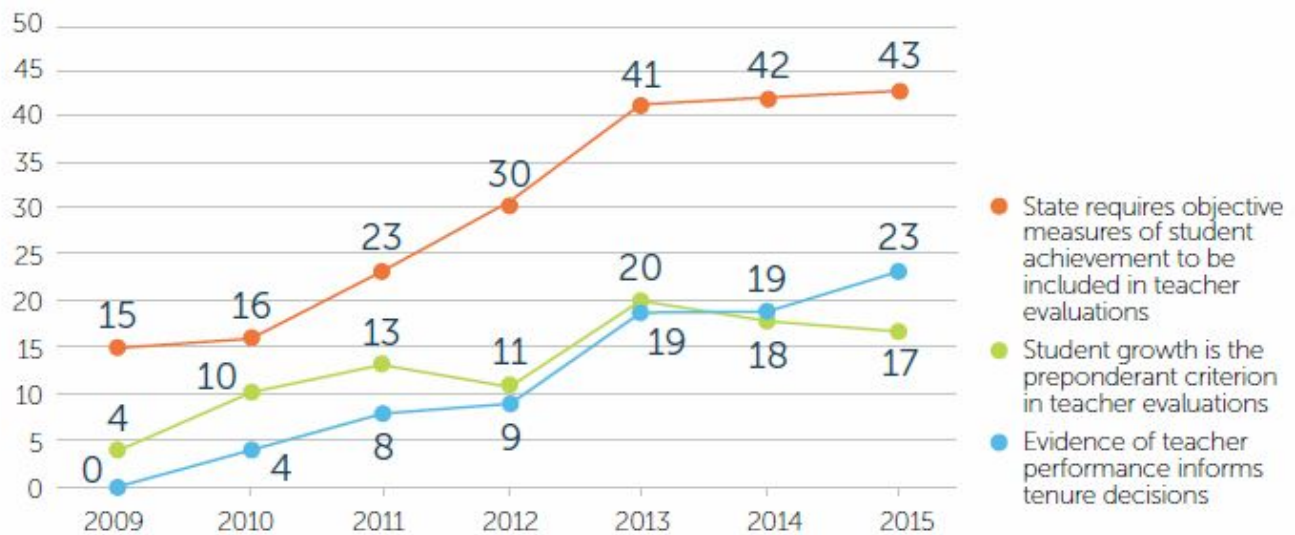
The findings fly in the face of skeptics who suggest that student achievement based teacher evaluations are not grounded in state policy but driven instead by ESEA/No Child Left Behind waivers that states have obtained from the federal government since 2013. In fact, in 2015, there are only five states in the nation (California, Iowa, Montana, Nebraska and Vermont) that still have no formal policy requiring objective measures of student achievement to be included in evaluation ratings. Only Alabama, New Hampshire and Texas have teacher effectiveness policies that exist only in waiver promises made to the U.S. Department of Education.

States still face hurdles, however, when it comes to implementation. The simultaneous rollout of new college- and career-readiness assessments and teacher evaluations has been one of the most significant challenges for states.

"The recognition that student learning and growth are essential to any meaningful definition of teacher effectiveness is now well-grounded in state policy," said NCTQ Senior Vice President for State and District Policy Sandi Jacobs. "Implementation challenges remain, but today nearly all states are working on evaluation systems that put a spotlight on classroom practices and student results."

The report also breaks new ground this year by taking a look, for the first time, at principal evaluation policy across the states.

Figure 1. Teacher effectiveness state policy trends (2009-2015)



### Key findings on state teacher evaluation policy:

- **Very few states are turning their backs on teacher effectiveness policy.** Since NCTQ's *State of the States: Connect the Dots* report in 2013, only South Carolina, Utah and Wisconsin no longer require student growth and achievement to be a significant factor in teacher ratings.
- **State of the states on teacher evaluations remains strong.** Twenty-seven states require annual evaluations in 2015, compared to just 15 states in 2009. Forty-five states require annual evaluations for all new, probationary teachers. Seventeen states include growth as a preponderant criterion in teacher evaluations, up from only four states in 2009. An additional 18 states include growth measures as a "significant" criterion in teacher evaluations. Twenty-three states now require that teacher performance informs tenure decisions, a policy that no state had in 2009.
- **States have more work to do to ensure that evaluations identify teachers who need improvement.** Despite a great deal of effort in the states to revamp teacher evaluations, the results in several early implementing states suggest there remains a lack of differentiation in teacher performance. Several factors may be contributing to this, including inadequate use of multiple observations and/or observers and lack of rigor of some measures of student achievement.

In this report, NCTQ also provides its first review of principal evaluation policy across the states. Jacobs explained, "Principals must also be held accountable for ensuring that students learn. But our review of principal evaluations suggests that these systems may often be an afterthought in state policy, failing to adequately assess school leaders on the unique ways they contribute to success in the classroom."

### Key findings on state principal evaluation policy:

- **Most states evaluate principals under same umbrella as teachers in evaluation law, regulations and policy.** Thirty-four states require annual evaluations for all principals. Nineteen states require student achievement / growth to be the preponderant criterion in

principal evaluations; an additional 14 require it to be a significant criterion. Eleven states have evaluation systems for principals that are exactly the same as the requirements for teachers; in 29 states, the principal evaluation are discussed separately from teacher evaluations, but the two policies appear to be virtually identical

- **State articulation of principal effectiveness lags behind teacher policies.** Only New Jersey explicitly requires that principals should be evaluated on the quality and effectiveness of the teacher evaluation process in their schools. In 22 states, principal evaluation policies do not specify who is responsible for conducting evaluations. Only 27 states explicitly require principal evaluations to include observations, a staple of teacher evaluations. Only 27 states require training for principal evaluators, and only nine require principal evaluators to be certified, compared to 17 states for teacher evaluation.

### **Key findings on state efforts to “connect the dots” by using teacher ratings to recognize and encourage effective instruction:**

- **Delaware, Florida and Louisiana lead the nation on connecting teacher evaluations to policies of consequence.** Each of these states uses evaluations of teacher effectiveness to inform a variety of teacher policies including teacher training, professional development, improvement planning, compensation, and accountability.
- **States with ambitious evaluation policies are using results.** Twenty-nine of 35 such states require teachers with poor evaluations to be placed on an improvement plan. Twenty-five states require evaluation results be used to inform professional development for all teachers. Fifteen states require districts to use improved evaluation to make better staffing decisions when and if layoffs become necessary.
- **Too few states reward excellent teaching with higher pay.** In 2015, only seven states (Florida, Hawaii, Indiana, Louisiana, Michigan, Nevada and Utah) directly tie teacher compensation to teacher evaluation results.

The full report can be viewed [here](#), along with state specific findings and recommendations.

### **About the National Council on Teacher Quality**

The National Council on Teacher Quality is a nonpartisan research and policy group committed to restructuring the teaching profession 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. To that end we work to achieve fundamental changes in the policy and practices of teacher preparation programs, school districts, state governments, and teachers unions. Our [Board of Directors](#) and [Advisory Board](#) come from a broad range of backgrounds and perspectives, and they all believe that policy changes are overdue in the recruitment and retention of teachers. More information about NCTQ can be found on the NCTQ website, [www.nctq.org](http://www.nctq.org).

###