

## What's New?

### NCCTQ Announces Advisory Board Members

The National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (NCCTQ) announces the appointment of its Advisory Board. Members were chosen jointly by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. The geographically diverse board is made up of individuals who bring a wealth of knowledge about issues related to teacher quality—representing state education agencies, institutions of higher education, and state legislatures.

The Advisory Board conducted its inaugural meeting in Washington, D.C., on May 24, 2007. Advisory Board members include the following:

- Pamela Y. England, Forrest City (Arkansas) High School
- Deb Hansen, Iowa Department of Education
- Shirley E. Harris, North Carolina State Board of Education
- Wendy Hughes, Georgia Department of Education
- Teresa Lubbers, Indiana State Senator
- Harry Moberly, Kentucky State Representative
- Colleen Seremet, Ed.D., Maryland State Department of Education
- Shawn Sriver, Indiana Department of Education
- Julie K. Underwood, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin–Madison
- Beverly A. Williams, Arkansas Department of Education

### NCCTQ Annual Conference: Advancing Student Achievement Through Effective Teaching and Leadership

NCCTQ will host its second annual What Works Conference on November 5–7, 2007, in Washington, D.C. The conference will bring together regional comprehensive assistance centers, state education agencies, and other national organizations whose work focuses teacher quality research, policy, and practice. With an emphasis on teaching and leading in at-risk schools and for students with special needs, the 2007 conference will focus on connections between teacher quality, leadership quality, and student outcomes. NCCTQ will offer several keynote speakers who are influential in teacher quality, leadership, and emerging policy and practice as well as a series of sessions chosen to represent the array of teacher quality topics with which state and local education agencies are grappling as they work to implement the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. Invitations will be sent in the next few weeks. For regular updates about this conference, visit [www.ncctq.org/calendar.php](http://www.ncctq.org/calendar.php).

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- *What does special education certification and licensure look like?*
- *What are states doing to increase the number of highly qualified teachers?*

## **Live Webcast: Paying for Teachers' Performance—Strategies and Conditions for Success**

NCCTQ hosted a live, interactive webcast on May 10, 2007, that examined the policy, research, and practice of performance-based compensation. Experts—Chas Anderson; Tricia Coulter, Ph.D.; Dan Goldhaber, Ph.D.; and Renee Moore—discussed the promise and pitfalls of value-added and other statistical measures of student achievement growth, as well as teaching portfolios and professional administrator evaluations. A recording of the live webcast, the prewebcast presentations, and additional resources are available online at [www.ncctq.org/webcasts/payforteach/](http://www.ncctq.org/webcasts/payforteach/).

## **NCCTQ Forum Helps States Implement Highly Qualified Teacher Plans**

On March 28–29, NCCTQ hosted a national issue forum to help states and regional comprehensive assistance centers move another step forward with the implementation of their state plans to ensure that highly qualified teachers are available for all students—regardless of where they live or the school they attend. The meeting summary, agenda, presentations, and resources from the meeting are available online at [www.ncctq.org/issueforums/hqplans/](http://www.ncctq.org/issueforums/hqplans/).

## **NCCTQ Publication Examines Links in Teacher Preparation and Teacher Practice for Students With Special Needs**

NCCTQ's May 2007 *TQ Research & Policy Brief*, "The Teacher Preparation ► Teacher Practices ► Student Outcomes Relationship in Special Education: Missing Links and New Connections," examines the relationships between preservice teacher preparation, teacher inservice practice, and outcomes for students with special needs. An exploration of the literature sheds light on these relationships, but it reveals a dearth of studies that would provide real illumination. Specific recommendations to direct further development of policy, research, and practice—and the interactions between the three—are provided. View the entire publication online at [www.ncctq.org/publications/may2007brief.pdf](http://www.ncctq.org/publications/may2007brief.pdf).

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## Stories From the Field

### ARCC at Edvantia Helps Tennessee Move Toward Equitable Teacher Distribution

Students in Tennessee’s high-poverty, high-minority schools have less access to the state’s highly qualified and most effective teachers—a problem the state has committed to solve. To assist the state in its efforts, the Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center (ARCC)—in partnership with NCCTQ—recently hosted two webinars for state officials. The Education Trust provided commentaries for the webinars.



The first webinar, held in March 2007, highlighted strategies that states are using to address the issue of inequitable distribution of highly qualified teachers as well as the challenges and opportunities involved in collecting and analyzing data on teacher distribution. Participants were introduced to a new Tennessee Department of Education study that included the equitable distribution of effective teachers in Tennessee. Information from the first webinar, including presenter bios and PowerPoint presentations, is available online at [www.edvantia.org/publications/arccwebinar/EqDist\\_032007.html](http://www.edvantia.org/publications/arccwebinar/EqDist_032007.html).

A follow-up webinar, held in April 2007 and presented by Cory Curl and Julie McCargar, Ed.D., from the Tennessee Department of Education, released the results of the effectiveness study that explored the current state of affairs in Tennessee with regard to teacher distribution and sought to answer the question, “Are Tennessee’s most educated, experienced, and effective teachers assigned to the students who need them most?” The study can be viewed online at [state.tn.us/education/nclb/doc/TeacherEffectiveness2007\\_03.pdf](http://state.tn.us/education/nclb/doc/TeacherEffectiveness2007_03.pdf).

ARCC and NCCTQ will partner with the Tennessee Department of Education to work with the six largest Tennessee districts that have the greatest equity gaps.

## Teacher Quality Questions From the Field

Each month NCCTQ responds to numerous questions and requests for information from the field. The following are a few of the recent requests for information received—chosen for their general applicability—and the responses provided by NCCTQ.

- [The term \*highly effective teacher\* is cited frequently in discussions regarding the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind \(NCLB\) Act. What will this mean for the future of teacher quality policy? What impact might this have on state education agencies \(SEAs\) and local education agencies \(LEAs\)? Is there a definition for, or measurement of, \*highly effective teacher\*?](#)
- [What does special education certification and licensure look like in the states?](#)
- [What actions are states taking to increase the number of highly qualified teachers?](#)

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**The term *highly effective teacher* is cited frequently in discussions regarding the reauthorization of the NCLB Act. What will this mean for the future of teacher quality policy? What impact might this have on SEAs and LEAs? Is there a definition for, or measurement of, *highly effective teacher*?**

The research is still in progress regarding the best definition and measurement of a *highly effective teacher*.” However, in a report recently released by the Commission on NCLB, *Beyond NCLB: Fulfilling the Promise to Our Nation’s Children*—especially the chapter, “Effective Teachers for All Students, Effective Principals for All Communities”—researchers and experts began to answer these questions by providing a framework of thought on the topic.

According to the Commission on NCLB (2007), “It is time to raise the bar and allow all teachers to demonstrate their *effectiveness* in the classroom rather than just their *qualifications* for entering it” (p. 47). Measurable gains in student achievement are one example of an indicator that may be used to define and measure teacher effectiveness. The commission also mentioned that the judgments of principals or peers also must be considered when measuring teacher effectiveness because good principals who are true leaders, and teachers with strong peer-review systems understand the qualities a teacher should possess to be considered effective.

In the policy arena, one of the recommendations from the Commission on NCLB (2007) is a shift in current thinking to require all teachers to be highly qualified effective teachers (HQETs)—teachers who demonstrate effectiveness in the classroom. This recommendation is accompanied by the following prescriptions provided by the experts on the commission:

- “States would be required to put in place systems for measuring the learning gains of a teacher’s students through a ‘value-added’ methodology, using three years of student achievement data, as well as principal evaluations or teacher peer reviews.
- “[To be considered highly effective,]... teachers would need to produce learning gains and receive positive principal or teacher peer review evaluations.
- “Student achievement can count for no less than 50 percent of the determination of HQET status. Teachers who fall in the top 75 percent of producing learning gains in the state and receive positive evaluations would achieve HQET status.” (p. 48)

This report by the Commission on NCLB is available online at [www.aspeninstitute.org/atf/cf/%7BDEB6F227-659B-4EC8-8F84-8DF23CA704F5%7D/NCLB\\_Book.pdf](http://www.aspeninstitute.org/atf/cf/%7BDEB6F227-659B-4EC8-8F84-8DF23CA704F5%7D/NCLB_Book.pdf)

A second resource on this topic—*Identifying Effective Teachers Using Performance on the Job* released by The Brookings Institute—provides some insight for SEAs and LEAs by outlining five action steps for finding and keeping effective teachers. These steps include the following:

- Reduction of entry barriers to the profession because research has shown that qualifications and effectiveness are not linked. This policy would expand the pool of teachers.
- Make it harder to tenure the least effective teachers after high-quality professional development during the first two years of teaching. This would require a system to define and measure *highly effective teacher* for the district or state.

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- Give bonuses to highly effective teachers willing to teach in disadvantaged schools.
- Establish systems to measure teachers' job performance, relying on both student achievement scores and evaluations by principals, peers, and parents.
- Track student performance and teacher effectiveness over time (Gordon, Kane, & Staiger, 2006).

The Brookings Institute report (Gordon, Kane, & Staiger, 2006) is available online at [www3.brookings.edu/views/papers/200604hamilton\\_1.pdf](http://www3.brookings.edu/views/papers/200604hamilton_1.pdf).

Just as with the term *highly qualified teacher* when NCLB was first written, *HQET* needs to be defined before it can become practice in the states. Many researchers have provided input on this subject, but there is not yet consensus on what a definition and measurement would look like. Some possible definitions and supporting research include the following:

- Effective teachers are those who contribute to growth in student academic achievement, measured by standardized tests (Commission on NCLB, 2007; Crane, 2002).
- Effective teachers are those who have the knowledge and skills to provide high-quality instruction, evaluated by principals, peers, and other specialists (Brandt, Mathers, Oliva, Brown-Sims, & Hess, 2007; Commission on NCLB, 2007; Danielson, 1996; Holtzapple, 2003; Jacob & Lefgren, 2005; Loup, Garland, Ellett, & Rugutt, 1996; Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, & Bernstein, 1985).
- Effective teachers are those with high-quality teaching performance measured by portfolio assessments (Andrejko, 1998; Attinello, Lare, & Waters, 2006; Tucker, Stronge, Gareis, & Beers, 2003).
- Effective teachers are those who have access to, and leverage, effective professional contexts (Johnson, 2006).

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## What does special education certification and licensure look like in the states?

The following table summarizes the laws and rules passed in all 50 states since 2000 regarding special education teacher credentialing and alignment with federal NCLB and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act regulations. Laws and rules can cover multiple topics. As such, there are not as many laws passed as there are categories covered. More than one rule or law also might fit in the same category, but they only will be counted once. Although this list attempts to provide a comprehensive picture of all laws and rules passed by states regarding special education since 2000, some laws and rules may not be represented.

Summary of Special Education Laws and Rules Passed by States Since 2000	
26 states passed rules or laws dealing with special education certification, licensure, credentialing, or endorsements.	AL, AR, CA, CO, FL, GA, ID, IL, IA, ME, MN, MT, NE, NV, NH, NM, NJ, NY, ND, OK, OR, SC, SD, VA, WA, WV
16 states passed rules or laws intended to align state standards regarding special education with federal requirements.	AL, AK, CA, CO, CT, DE, IL, KS, LA, MT, NY, NC, SC, SD, TN, VA
Nine states passed laws or rules dealing with special education teacher preparation.	AK, CA, CO, DE, MS, NE, NY, VA, WY
Eight states passed laws or rules dealing with some component of special education funding.	AK, CA, FL, MO, NE, NH, VT, WY
Seven states passed laws or rules dealing with special education and early childhood students or teachers.	AK, AZ, DE, ME, NC, OH, TN
Five states passed laws or rules dealing with professional development for special education teachers.	CA, RI, TX, UT, VT
Five states passed laws or rules regarding recruitment or retention of special education teachers.	IL, KS, ME, SD, TN
Four states passed laws or rules defining or empowering commissions or councils with authority over, or responsibility to monitor, special education practices in the state.	NH, NJ, NC, OK*
Two states passed laws or rules regarding special education data tracking systems or student tracking.	CA, LA

Note: All law and rule summaries and information were generated directly from a LexisNexis database.

\* Refers to the rule as *issued* but not *adopted* or *signed*.

## What actions are states taking to increase numbers of highly qualified teachers?

States are using a variety of strategies to increase the number of highly qualified teachers, ranging from developing the skills and qualifications of current teachers to recruiting new teachers and preparing students to become qualified teachers. The Education Commission of the States operates a 50-state database that houses information about state-level targeted recruitment efforts for hard-to-staff schools and subjects. The database is available online at [mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=1328](http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=1328).

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In addition, NCCTQ offers the following three strategies.

**Strategy 1: Professional development activities are being used across the country to increase numbers of highly qualified teachers.** Professional development, when done effectively, provides teachers with the knowledge and skills to teach and with a sense of community and support. The following reports further explore the use of professional development:

- *Professional Development Analysis* (McREL Insights), Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning, 2005. [www.mcrel.org/PDF/ProfessionalDevelopment/5051IR\\_Prof\\_dvlpmt\\_analysis.pdf](http://www.mcrel.org/PDF/ProfessionalDevelopment/5051IR_Prof_dvlpmt_analysis.pdf)
- *Inside the Black Box: School District Spending on Professional Development in Education: Lessons From Five Urban Districts*, The Finance Project, 2005. [www.financeproject.org/Publications/insidetheblackbox.pdf](http://www.financeproject.org/Publications/insidetheblackbox.pdf)
- *Online Professional Development: Why SREB States Should Use It*, Southern Regional Education Board, 2004. [www.sreb.org/programs/EdTech/pubs/PDF/04T05-OnlineProfDev.pdf](http://www.sreb.org/programs/EdTech/pubs/PDF/04T05-OnlineProfDev.pdf)
- *Professional Development: Learning from the Best: A Toolkit for Schools and Districts Based on the National Awards Program for Model Professional Development*, North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 1999. [www.learningpt.org/pdfs/pd/lftb.pdf](http://www.learningpt.org/pdfs/pd/lftb.pdf)

The following federal initiatives work to provide professional development to teachers:

- Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative: [www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/index.html)
- Teacher Quality Enhancement Grants: [www.ed.gov/programs/heatqp/tqpsum.html](http://www.ed.gov/programs/heatqp/tqpsum.html)
- Professional Development Schools: [www.ncate.org/public/pdsOverview.asp?ch=136](http://www.ncate.org/public/pdsOverview.asp?ch=136)
- Academy for Urban School Leadership: [www.ausl-chicago.org](http://www.ausl-chicago.org)

**Strategy 2: Providing financial incentives to qualified teachers in at-risk schools and in high-needs subjects is a way to increase the number of high-quality teachers.** Offering financial incentives is an increasingly popular method of recruiting teachers to serve in hard-to-staff schools. The Education Commission of the States (ECS) maintains a database that details district- and state-level efforts to use financial incentives to attract qualified teachers to at-risk schools. Some are pilot programs for eventual larger-level implementation. The database can be accessed at [mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=1287](http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=1287).

The following studies and initiatives provide more information on financial incentives:

- *Options for Studying Teacher Pay Reform Using Natural Experiments*, Mathematica Policy Research, 2006. [www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/pdfs/teacherpayreform.pdf](http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/pdfs/teacherpayreform.pdf)
- *The Effectiveness of the Teacher Advancement Program*, National Institute for Excellence in Teaching, 2007. [www.talentedteachers.org/pubs/effective\\_tap07\\_full.pdf](http://www.talentedteachers.org/pubs/effective_tap07_full.pdf)
- *Diversifying Teacher Compensation* (ECS Issue Paper), ECS, 2005. [www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/65/83/6583.pdf](http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/65/83/6583.pdf)
- Teacher Incentive Fund: [www.ed.gov/programs/teacherincentive/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/programs/teacherincentive/index.html)
- Adjunct Teacher Corps: [www.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/competitiveness/teachercorps.html](http://www.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/competitiveness/teachercorps.html)

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**Strategy 3: Form partnerships between state departments of education and institutions of higher education.** Revised state highly qualified teacher (HQT) plans contain examples of effective partnerships between state departments of education and state institutions of higher education in recruiting and retaining teachers in hard-to-staff schools and subject areas. Specific examples can be found in the following state plans:

- [Kansas State Department of Education Revised State Plan for Meeting HQT Goal in NCLB](#)
- [Louisiana Plan for HQTs](#)
- [Maryland's Plan for Meeting the HQT Goal](#)
- [Nevada Revised HQT Plan](#)
- [New Jersey's Plan for Meeting the HQT Goal](#)
- [New Mexico Title II State Plan](#)
- [Ohio's Revised HQT Plan](#) and [Ohio's Teacher Equity Plan](#)
- [South Carolina Department of Education Revised State Plan for Meeting the HQT Goal](#)

The following studies examine the role of teacher preparation and HQTs:

- ***Teacher Preparation Research: Current Knowledge, Gaps, and Recommendations***, Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy, 2001. [depts.washington.edu/ctpmail/PDFs/TeacherPrep-WFFM-02-2001.pdf](http://depts.washington.edu/ctpmail/PDFs/TeacherPrep-WFFM-02-2001.pdf)
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- ***Preparing to Stay: Examining the Effects of Specialized Preparation on Urban Teacher Retention***. Urban Teacher Education Collaborative, 2005. [www.idea.gseis.ucla.edu/publications/utec/wp/pdf/08.pdf](http://www.idea.gseis.ucla.edu/publications/utec/wp/pdf/08.pdf)

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This work was originally produced in whole or in part by the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality with funds from the U.S. Department of Education under cooperative agreement number S283B050051. The content does not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Department of Education, nor does mention or visual representation of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the federal government.

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