

What's New?

Second Annual NCCTQ What Works Conference

NCCTQ will host its second annual What Works Conference, *Advancing Student Achievement Through Effective Teaching and Leadership*, on November 5-7, 2007, at the Fairmont in Washington, D.C. This invitational event will bring together regional comprehensive centers, state education agencies, and other national organizations whose work focuses on educator quality research, policy, and practice. The 2007 conference will address connections between teacher quality, leadership quality, and student outcomes with an emphasis on teaching and leading in at-risk schools and students with special needs. The interrelationship between teacher quality and leadership provides a strong foundation for improving student achievement, especially when effective leadership is the linchpin of an effective education system—a system of aligned, coordinated, adaptive, and sustainable policies that work for all learners. NCCTQ will offer several keynote speakers who are influential in teacher quality; leadership; and emerging research, policy, and practice, as well as a series of sessions chosen to represent the array of educator quality topics that state and local educational agencies are grappling with as they work to implement the No Child Left Behind Act.

Register Now for the Next NCCTQ Webcast—*America's Challenge: Effective Teachers for At-Risk Schools and Students*

The National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (NCCTQ) will host its next live, interactive webcast on October 11, 2007, from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time).

In the two short years since the launch of NCCTQ, a tremendous amount of research-based information has been compiled on the availability, recruitment, and retention of teachers for at-risk schools and students.

NCCTQ has compiled much of this learning in its inaugural biennial report, *America's Challenge: Effective Teachers for At-Risk Schools and Students*. On October 11, NCCTQ will introduce the biennial report, summarize some of its most important findings, and tell some stories from the field—with a focus on teachers of students with special needs. Some never-before-released polling

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- *What does the research say about good policy and practice related to teacher support, induction, and mentoring? Is there a relationship between extended-day teacher contracts and teacher leadership activities? Is mentoring a more effective use of dollars than reducing class size?*
- *What information is available about systems for gathering data on teacher supply and demand? Are there states that are particularly proficient at working with this type of data?*
- *Regarding reform in teacher certification structures, what are some good articles on 3-tiered licensure systems? How is certification structured in the states? What information is available on middle grades certification? What are examples of best practices regarding the Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) requirements for special education teachers?*

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data on teachers in their first year of teaching, collected by the research firm Public Agenda, will also be introduced. To register for the free online event, visit

<https://comp17.eventcenterlive.com/cfm/ec/register/reg.cfm?BID=1&RegID=D1C069B4>.

New Online Resource: Highly Qualified Special Education Teacher Requirements

The *Highly Qualified Special Education Teacher Requirements* database includes state statutes, administrative code, including education rules and regulations, to provide a more complete and accurate picture of activity surrounding the critically important issue of special education teacher requirements, giving specific attention to state activity with regard to aligning practice and policy to meet the mandates of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004. The database is available as an online resource on the NCCTQ website at <http://www.ncctq.org>.

The TQ Source Has a New Policy Database: *Special Education Teacher Certification and Licensure*

The *Special Education Teacher Certification and Licensure* database includes information about policies in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories pertaining to special education teacher certification, licensure, and endorsements. The database is available online at the NCCTQ website at

<http://www.tqsource.org/topics/certification.asp>.

NCCTQ's Latest TQ Research and Policy Brief: *The Teacher Preparation → Teacher Practices → Student Outcomes Relationship in Special Education: Missing Links and New Connections*

This brief by Laura Goe, Ph.D., at ETS and Jane Coggshall, Ph.D., at Learning Point Associates examines the literature on the relationship between preservice teacher preparation, teacher inservice practice, and outcomes for students with special needs. Specific recommendations for program improvement and further research are provided. The brief is available at <http://www.ncctq.org/publications/may2007brief.pdf>. Hard copies can also be requested through ncctq@learningpt.org.

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Stories From the Field

Federal Technical Assistance System Helps Wisconsin Support New Teachers

Through a collaborative effort, the REL Midwest, NCCTQ, and the Great Lakes West Comprehensive Assistance Center provided assistance to the state of Wisconsin in its efforts to support new teachers through statewide quality induction and mentoring.

On January 24-25, 2007, the REL Midwest hosted its first *Research to Action Forum*—Advancing Research, Policy, and Practice for Teacher Quality. At the forum, stakeholders from Wisconsin, with the support of Great Lakes West Regional Comprehensive Center and NCCTQ, determined that the impact of school culture and climate on teacher effectiveness and on teacher retention is significantly linked to support for new teachers in their first years on the job.

Participation in well-established and effective teacher induction and mentoring programs is one essential component to effectiveness and retention. While Wisconsin has made progress towards supporting teachers who are new to the profession through recent legislation that requires all school districts to have a teacher mentoring and induction program in place, state education leaders were concerned that some districts have not implemented a system to ensure high-quality mentoring. As a result, the action plan included developing key message points about the benefits of effective mentoring and induction programs and how to ensure that the program at individual schools and districts is a quality program that enhances teacher effectiveness and retention and ultimately improves student learning.

On June 25-26, 2007, Great Lakes West, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI), and NCCTQ hosted the *Wisconsin Initial Educator Seminar*. Stakeholders from across the state attending the meeting, including the Wisconsin Education Association Council, Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators, and representatives from several cooperative education service agencies, universities, and school districts. The purpose of the two-day meeting was to provide the Wisconsin DPI with needs-sensing information and next steps to carry out more effective communications about statewide quality mentoring and induction programs for initial educators. During the seminar, participants examined data sources for the benefits and components of effective support systems for initial educators. The data sources included research, as well as data from the initial educator and mentor surveys conducted in early June. As a result, participants concluded the seminar with key benefits and quality components messages tailored for each stakeholder group, as well as an actionable plan for moving forward with the dissemination of that message.

According to Linda Miller, director of the Great Lakes West Comprehensive Center, one of the essential factors that contributed to the success of the seminar was the state's ability to engage the participants in a discussion based on a strong research base. "Great Lakes West worked with NCCTQ to identify research and resources on induction and mentoring. As a regional comprehensive center, we were confident going into the seminar that the state had what they needed to begin building a better induction and mentoring system," said Miller.

For more about this event, please see the Great Lakes West website at <http://www.learningpt.org/greatlakeswest/>. Also, access resources about teacher induction and mentoring at <http://www.tqsource.org/>.

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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.

- [What does the research say about good policy and practice related to teacher support, induction, and mentoring? Is there a relationship between extended-day teacher contracts and teacher leadership activities? Is mentoring a more effective use of dollars than reducing class size?](#)
- [What information is available about systems for gathering data on teacher supply and demand? Are there states that are particularly proficient at working with this type of data?](#)
- [Regarding reform in teacher certification structures, what are some good articles on 3-tiered licensure systems? How is certification structured in the states? What information is available on middle grades certification? What are examples of best practices regarding the Highly Qualified Teacher \(HQT\) requirements for special education teachers?](#)

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Is there a relationship between extended-day teacher contracts and teacher leadership activities?

Unfortunately, research that looks specifically at the relationship between extended-day teacher contracts and teacher leadership capacity is scarce. Despite the lack of research, there are a few resources that indicate additional time in the school day spent on teacher collaboration can be important in the development of teacher skills and teacher leadership activities.

Little (1999) describes how schools can use time during the school day better to increase teacher collaboration. She refers to another article (Peterson, McCarthy, & Elmore, 1996) in which the researchers conducted three interesting case studies of how schools reorganized their schedules to give teachers more opportunities to learn. The primary message of the paper is that the provision of extra time is necessary but not sufficient—it is in how the extra time is used that is the crucial factor.

Another research study (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004) examines the relationship between mentoring and teacher retention. The results of the study indicate that teacher mentoring is only really powerful when it is combined with structures such as common planning time and teacher collaboration.

In terms of practice, this question brings to mind the work of California's Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program, which showed it had an effect on beginning teachers' seeking out and engaging in leadership roles earlier in their careers. For more information, visit <http://www.btsa.ca.gov/>.

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References

- Little, J. W. (1999). Organizing schools for teacher learning. In L. Darling-Hammond & G. Sykes (Eds.), *Teaching as the learning profession* (pp. 232-262). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Peterson, P. L., McCarthy, S. J., & Elmore, R. F. (1996). Learning from school restructuring. *American Educational Research Journal*, 33(1), 119–153.
- Smith, T. M., & Ingersoll, R. M. (2004). What are the effects of induction and mentoring on beginning teacher turnover? *American Educational Research Journal*, 41(3), 681–714.

Is mentoring a more effective use of dollars than reducing class size?

A good place to begin in comparing student achievement and teacher retention outcomes related to class size reduction and induction programs is the ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. Specifically, one report (Hertling, Leonard, Lumsden, & Smith, 2000) examines the pros and cons of small class size, based on available research.

In addition, Hanushek (1998) provides a useful review of the literature on the effect of class size reduction on student achievement. Furthermore, evaluations of the class size reduction programs implemented in California and Florida (Bohrnstedt & Stecher, 2002; Council for Education Policy, Research, and Implementation, 2005) found declining teacher quality and few, if any, gains in student achievement following the implementation of class size reduction policies.

As with many subsets of education research, there are few rigorous studies that link professional development, induction, or mentoring programs to student achievement. There is some available research that examines the effect of professional development on recruitment and retention. For example, one study (Barnes, Crowe, & Schaefer, 2007) found that teacher retention is a powerful cost-saving measure. Additionally, there are resources available that examine the cost-benefit of induction and mentoring programs through the Network of Researchers on Teacher Induction. The network is accessible online through the New Teacher Center at http://www.newteachercenter.org/cgi-bin/norti_area/research.cgi. Finally, several studies examine the effect of high-quality induction and mentoring programs on teacher retention (e.g., Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004).

References

- Bohrnstedt, G., & Stecher, B. (Eds.) (2002). *What we have learned about class size reduction in California*. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education. Retrieved September 18, 2007, from http://www.classize.org/techreport/CSRYear4_final.pdf
- Council for Education Policy, Research, and Implementation. (2005). *Impact of the class size amendment on the quality of education in Florida*. Tallahassee, FL: Author. Retrieved September 18, 2007, from <http://www.cepri.state.fl.us/pdf/2005%20Class%20Size%20Impact%20Full%20Report.pdf>

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- Hertling, E., Leonard, C., Lumsden, L., & Smith, S. C. (2000). *Policy report: Reporting on policy issues in K-12 educational management*. Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. Retrieved September 18, 2007, from http://eric.uoregon.edu/pdf/policy_reports/Class%20Size%20Policy%20Report.pdf
- Hanushek, E. (1998). *The evidence on class size* (Occasional paper). Rochester, NY: W. Allen Wallis Institute of Political Economy. Retrieved September 18, 2007, from http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/16/4f/5b.pdf
- Ingersoll, R. M., & Kralik, J. M. (2004). *The impact of mentoring on teacher retention: What the research says*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States. Retrieved September 18, 2007, from <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/50/36/5036.htm>
- Smith, T. M., & Ingersoll, R. M. (2004). What are the effects of induction and mentoring on beginning teacher turnover? *American Educational Research Journal*, 41(3), 681–714.

What information is available about systems for gathering data on teacher supply and demand? Are there states that are particularly proficient at working with this type of data?

Many states already have longitudinal data systems in place, and many more states are developing them in order to comply with requirements of NCLB. Many of the states' data systems track some aspects of teacher supply and demand in order to tie the educational qualifications of new teachers to student achievement. Additionally, the data systems often help to track teachers' achievements toward becoming "highly qualified." For details to that end, ECS and NCCTQ have created a database report on accepted state highly qualified teacher plans, which is available online at http://www.ecs.org/html/educationissues/teachingquality/nclb-hqtp/state_Plan_Tool_Real.asp

No one state was found to be particularly good at tracking teacher supply and demand data specifically. Many states do, however, have very comprehensive data gathering systems that track *parts* of the process. Following is a brief summary of some states that have highly regarded data gathering systems as reported by the Center for Teaching Quality (CTQ) Teaching Quality Data Systems Roadmap, the Data Quality Campaign, or the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) 2003 *Data Systems to Enhance Teacher Quality*.

- Virginia – Using the 2003 State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) report that analyzed 14 state-level data systems as a guide, Virginia is continuing to build an extensive and comprehensive data gathering system that will collect data about teachers' education, career steps, professional development, and students' achievement through the Virginia Initiative for Technology and Administrative Leadership (VITAL, formerly TEAL II).
- Wisconsin – The data collection capabilities of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction produce an "extensive array of reports on student performance, demographics, special education, teachers and staff, finance, public libraries, and school performance." From this data, Wisconsin develops reports and statistics available to the public, including yearly data on teacher supply and demand.

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- New York – The New York State Education Department has maintained databases on teachers for the past couple of decades. There are three databases. One is a program completer database, which includes names and demographic information, institution, test scores, and proposed certification area for people who have completed a teacher preparation program at public and private colleges and universities and selected alternative programs. The second is a teacher certification database, which includes information on those who have received state certificates. Finally, the third is an employment database, which includes records on teachers who are currently teaching.

Reference

Voorhees, R. A., & Barnes, G. T. (with Rothman, R.) (2003). Data systems to enhance teacher quality. Denver, CO: State Higher Education Officers. Retrieved September 18, 2007, from <http://www.sheeo.org/quality/data%20sys.pdf>

Regarding reform in teacher certification structures, what are some good articles on 3-tiered licensure systems? How is certification structured in the states? What information is available on middle grades certification? What are examples of best practices regarding the Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) requirements for special education teachers?

What are some good articles on 3-tiered licensure systems?

Most states have some kind of tiered structure, from two to many, defined by education, experience, endorsement, and assessment. For some research and analysis, refer to the following ECS report and database:

- Hill, T. L., & Dozier, T. (2003). Multi-tiered, performance-based licensure. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States. Retrieved September 18, 2007, from <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/51/22/5122.htm>
- Education Commission of the States. (2006). Certification and licensure tiers or structure. Denver, CO: Author. Retrieved September 18, 2007, from <http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=1367>

For quick reference, see the following table with the basic tier structures for each state. Again, for more detail, please see the above link to the ECS database.

How is certification structured in the states?

1 Tier	2 Tiers	3 Tiers	No Tiers – Multiple Categories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Dakota (1 tier, multiple categories) • Texas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arizona (2 tiers for elementary and secondary) • California • District of Columbia • Florida • Hawaii • Indiana • Kentucky • Massachusetts (2 tiers, 3 levels) • Missouri • Montana • New Jersey • New York • North Carolina • Ohio • Pennsylvania • South Carolina (2 tiers, multiple levels) • Tennessee • Vermont • Virginia • Washington 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alabama • Alaska • Arkansas • Colorado • Connecticut • Delaware • Illinois • Iowa • Kansas • Louisiana • Maine • Maryland • Mississippi • Nebraska • New Mexico • North Dakota • Oklahoma • Oregon • Utah • West Virginia • Wisconsin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Georgia • Idaho • Minnesota • Nevada • Rhode Island • Wyoming

What information is available on middle grades certification?

The National Middle School Association (NMSA) has created a listing of middle grades certification levels for each state, which is available online at

<http://www.nmsa.org/ProfessionalPreparation/CertificationLicensurebyState/tabid/1235/Default.aspx>.

Through the TQ Source, an online database provided by NCCTQ at <http://www.tqsource.org>, information can be found on two states' administrative code, out of the handful of states that have middle grades certification. A direct link to these findings can be found at <http://www.tqsource.org/candl/policy/index.asp>. As for the other states, their websites provide information on middle grades certification:

- Alabama: The Administrative code for Alabama's middle-level certificate (Grades 4-8) is available at <http://www.alabamaadministrativecode.state.al.us/docs/ed/3ED3.htm#T1>.
- Michigan: The rules for Michigan's certification can be found online at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/AdministrativeRules_4_09_61718_7.pdf.

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- Georgia: The rules for Georgia middle grades certification can be found at <http://www.gapsc.com/TeacherEducation/Standards2000/GEORGIA2000Standards.doc>, and their standards for program approval can be found at <http://www.gapsc.com/TeacherEducation/Standards2000/GEORGIA2000Standards.doc>.

What are examples of best practices regarding the Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) requirements for special education teachers?

For useful general licensing information for all states, the Title II website, <https://title2.ed.gov>, is a good resource. Also, visit <http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Reporttq.aspx?id=1542&map=0> to access the *TQ Source* database on special education certification and licensure state policies.

Based on available research, Ohio provides a current example of a state that is reforming licensure specifically to assist intervention specialists with meeting the HQT provisions of NCLB; however, “intervention specialist” is not a specialty area seen in many other states.

In addition, Virginia will soon propose tougher guidelines for teacher qualifications, including for special education. These proposed guidelines will require subject-level competency at the high school level, either by testing or a major in the subject area in college. In addition, special education teachers with students who aren’t getting traditional diplomas would have to pass only middle-school level tests in subjects such as biology or math.

Reference

Fernandez, D. (2006, July 26). VA to push for tougher standards for teachers. *The Virginian-Pilot*. Retrieved September 18, 2007, from <http://home.hamptonroads.com/stories/story.cfm?story=108139&ran=57401>