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TEACHER QUALITY

Statement of the Issue

A consensus of research finds that the single greatest indicator of student achievement is the quality of the teacher in the classroom. There are a number of national initiatives to promote effective teaching: quality teacher preparation, strong principal leadership and support, proper assignment to the classroom, and rewards for effective teaching such as through performance pay.

Discussion

National Perspective

Citing a study conducted for the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality,¹ the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) notes that even though research demonstrates that some teachers affect their students' academic growth more than other teachers, it has not categorically identified the specific indicators of teacher quality, such as the characteristics, classroom practices, and qualifications that are most likely to improve student learning.² Some researchers have shown that with the exception of a few factors, they cannot state, with a strong degree of certainty and consistency, which aspects of teacher quality matter most for student learning.³

The GAO report also notes the following:⁴

- The high attrition rates and shortages of teachers, especially in high-poverty areas are challenges. For example, almost half of teachers leave the profession in the first five years of teaching, and there is an anticipated surge in retirement of teachers from the baby boom generation.
- Research has shown that many students, especially those in high-poverty and high-minority schools, have teachers who have limited knowledge of the subjects they teach.
- There are concerns that graduates of teacher education programs are inadequately prepared to teach to high standards and that once teachers are in the classroom, training to help remedy this situation is sporadic and uncoordinated.

Nationwide there are about 3 million teachers employed in approximately 14,000 public school districts in about 89,000 schools.⁵ Most prospective teachers are trained through teacher preparation programs at institutions of higher education. However, teachers may also gain certification through alternative routes designed for prospective teachers who have been out of the job market or have a career in a different field and who hold at least an undergraduate degree. Each state prescribes standards for these programs within its own state. Although state and local governments have traditionally had the primary responsibility for overseeing teacher quality, the federal government has been redefining its role in this

¹ *Teacher Quality and Student Achievement: Making the Most of Recent Research*, Laura Goe and Leslie M. Stickler, National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, March 2008. The literature review cited two key teacher qualifications that were found to be consistently associated with increased student achievement: a teacher's knowledge of mathematics matters for student learning at all school levels, but particularly at the secondary level, and a teacher's level of experience matters, but only for the first five years of teaching. The contribution of experience to student learning appears to level off after five years.

² *Teacher Quality*, GAO-09-593, July 2009.

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.*

area.⁶ At the federal level, the U.S. Department of Education (U.S. DOE) provides financial assistance to states, institutions of higher education, and school districts to support teacher quality, including teacher preparation and ongoing training for practicing teachers.

Teacher and principal preparation programs are undergoing an unprecedented degree of scrutiny and challenge. Critics assert that teachers need more training to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of a diverse student population and to use data to drive instruction.⁷ They also assert that programs fail to ascertain whether the teachers they produce have the requisite skills to be effective once they are employed. The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) observed that most states have adopted new standards for preparation and certification of principals. However, the traditional models of training provided to school principals are still out of sync with the challenges faced by today's leaders.⁸ SREB points out that instructional leadership—improving curriculum, instruction, and student achievement should be at the center of the principal's role. The key measure of success for teacher education programs today must be how well they produce teachers who can demonstrate that they can produce learning gains in K-12 students.⁹

The National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (NCCTQ), a collaborative effort of Educational Testing Service (ETS), Learning Point Associates, and Vanderbilt University, asserts that one benefit of the recent economic times is that teaching is becoming a more attractive career choice and provides an opportunity to encourage professionals to consider teaching, particularly in chronic teacher shortage areas and subjects (math, science, bilingual education, and special education).¹⁰

Schools and districts struggle to retain teachers and the profession continues to face high attrition levels, due to retirement, job dissatisfaction, or teachers pursuing a different career. The 2008 National Commission on Teaching and America's Future's (NCTAF) report noted that over 50 percent of the nation's teachers and principals are baby boomers.¹¹ During the next four years the nation could lose a third of its most accomplished educators to retirement. Additionally, the wave of departures will peak during the 2010-2011 school year, when over one hundred thousand veteran teachers could leave.¹² The report contends that the nation cannot recruit its way out of this problem. According

⁶ *Teacher Preparation*, GAO-09-573, July 2009.

⁷ *Building a High Quality Education Workforce: A Governor's Guide to Human Capital Development*, Tabitha Grossman, National Governor's Association's Center for Best Practices, 2009. A briefing prepared for the 2009 Governor's Education Symposium, *Perfecting the Formula: Effective Strategies = Educational Success* (June 2009) notes that only 18 states collect any meaningful objective data that reflect program effectiveness and that states do an even poorer job of holding alternate route preparation programs accountable.

⁸ *SREB Leadership Curriculum Modules: Professional Learning Framework and Module Summaries*, SREB, November 2008.

⁹ *Toward a National Framework for Evidence of Effectiveness of Teacher Education Programs*, Alene Russell and Mona Wineburg, *Perspectives*, American Association of State Colleges and Universities, Fall 2007.

¹⁰ *Teacher Recruitment: Strategies for Widening the Pool in a Shrinking Economy*, Kathleen T. Hayes and Ellen Behrstock, NCCTQ, June 2009.

¹¹ *Learning Teams: Creating What's Next*, Thomas G. Carroll and Elizabeth Foster, NCTAF, April 2008.

¹² The number of classroom teachers needed each year in Florida is currently determined by teacher turnover, student enrollment, and Florida's constitutional class size requirements. For 2006-2007 and 2007-2008, the DOE noted that approximately 16,000 of Florida's teachers left the classroom, representing nine percent of the teacher workforce. Of the teachers leaving in 2007-2008, 53 percent voluntarily resigned before retirement, while 30 percent left for other reasons (expired contracts, staff reductions, dismissals, death, and disability), and 17 percent retired. The DOE estimates that Florida will need to fill 21,113 positions in 2010-2011, which includes 14,961 to replace teachers who retire, resign, or leave for other reasons and 6,447 to meet class size requirements (i.e., student to teacher class size ratios, as designated by grade level groupings in core curricula courses). Due to the uncertainties in the economy, the DOE's projected number of teachers needed due to teacher turnover is based on a five-year average and an expectation that current trends in student enrollments will continue into the next three years, meaning that enrollments may have a smaller than normal impact on the number of teachers needed. The DOE notes that although a number of early baby boomers have already retired, the state is still likely to experience a steady increase in teacher retirements. The projections are based on the number of classroom teachers in 2008-2009 (168,938), enrollment projections approved by the 2009 Enrollment Estimating Conference, and class size targets at the school level (2009-2010) and classroom level (2010-2011). The information was provided in correspondence with DOE on September 30, 2009, October 1, 2009, and October 13, 2009.

to the NCTAF, the national cost of teacher turnover could exceed \$7 billion a year.¹³ The estimate is based on teachers who leave their school or district during a given year. It does not include a school district's costs for teachers who move from school to school within a district and any federal or state investments that are lost when a teacher leaves.

Citing data collected from the National Center for Education Statistics Schools and Staffing Survey, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities reports that teacher attrition can be cut in half if beginning teachers are given the opportunity to participate in comprehensive teacher induction programs. The study asserts that if teachers are to become the skilled professionals they need to be, and if they are to stay in the field, stakeholders need to take coordinated action to expand and improve induction programs and to make them more universally available.¹⁴

Florida Initiatives

In 2009, the Florida Legislature enacted legislation to address the quality of teachers assigned to the lowest performing schools.¹⁵ School districts may not assign a higher percentage than the school district average of temporarily certified teachers, teachers in need of improvement, or out-of-field teachers to these schools.

To address the needs of high poverty and high minority schools, Florida's efforts include PROMiSE, a partnership that includes universities, school districts, educational consortia, and the Florida Virtual School, to improve the mathematics and science achievement of students through teacher professional development. Additionally, the National Staff Development Council provided assistance with an initiative to train teachers in struggling schools to work in learning communities¹⁶ to review, teach, and revise lessons based on student performance. Project RISE (Rewards and Incentives for School Educators), a five-year program funded by federal Teacher Incentive Funds, provides rewards and incentives for teachers and administrators in 37 participating high-need public schools in Miami-Dade County. Funds are provided for teachers to qualify for performance-based compensation and to recruit and hire National Board Certified teachers (NBCT) in a high-need content area to serve as teacher leaders.

Florida's Preparation of Teachers

Florida provides several pathways to meet professional teacher certification requirements, including initial teacher preparation programs provided by universities and colleges for individuals seeking a degree.¹⁷ Educator Preparation Institutes (EPIs) and school district alternative certification programs provide individuals who already have baccalaureate degrees with professional training on the competencies needed for professional certification.¹⁸ The DOE reviews and approves educator preparation programs in Florida, including public and private colleges and universities.¹⁹ The State Board of Education is required to maintain a system for the development and approval of teacher preparation programs that allows postsecondary teacher preparation institutions to employ a variety of innovative teacher preparation practices while being held accountable for producing graduates with the competencies and skills necessary to achieve the state's education goals.²⁰

¹³ *Policy Brief: The High Cost of Teacher Turnover*, Thomas G. Carroll, NCTAF, 2007.

¹⁴ *Teacher Induction Programs: Trends and Opportunities*, American Association of State Colleges and Universities, October 2006.

¹⁵ Chapter 2009-144, L.O.F., codified in section 1012.2315, F.S. Prior to this change, the provision only applied to schools designated as "D" or "F" schools. Low performing schools are defined in section 1008.33, F.S.

¹⁶ The terms "professional learning communities," "professional learning teams," and "lesson study," are used interchangeably to describe long-term professional development in which teams of teachers systematically and collaboratively conduct research closely tied to lessons and then use what they learn about student thinking to become more effective instructors.

¹⁷ Section 1004.04, F.S.

¹⁸ Sections 1004.85 and 1012.56(8), F.S.

¹⁹ Section 1004.04, F.S., Rules 6A-4.003 and 6A-5.066, F.A.C., and *Initial and Continued Approval Standard Guidelines*, DOE, May 2009. Programs are approved for seven years.

²⁰ Section 1004.04(1)(b), F.S.

The Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) recently reviewed Florida's multiple pathways for an individual to attain teaching credentials.²¹ The report's findings include the following:

- Nearly half (46 percent) of the 8,668 new teachers, those teaching with a Florida professional certificate for the first time during the 2005-2006 school year (the most current year for which complete data are available), had completed their teaching credential in another state.²²
- Initial teacher preparation programs offered by Florida universities and colleges produced 40 percent or 3,498 of the new teachers in the state during the 2005-2006 school year.
- Nineteen public and 20 private colleges and universities offer teacher preparation programs in Florida.²³ These programs typically serve upper-division students who have already completed 60 hours of college credit.²⁴ The programs generally provide this training in traditional classrooms, although institutions increasingly also offer online course options. Students must spend at least the last semester of their programs as full-time student teachers. Students must also pass all three portions of the Florida Teacher Certification Examination (General, Professional, and Subject Area Exams), and typically take at least two years to complete these programs after admission.
- School districts are required to offer alternative certification programs.²⁵ During the 2007-2008 school year, 45 of Florida's school districts provided alternative certification programs to classroom teachers who were hired on a three-year, non-renewable temporary certificate.²⁶
- To complete the alternative certification program and qualify for professional certification, participants must complete a minimum number of teaching days; document competence on all basic teaching skills; attend instructional classes, workshops, and seminars; and pass the Professional Education portion of the Florida Teacher Certification exam. Participants typically take one to one and a half years to complete these programs and must do so within three years. These programs produced nine percent of the new Florida teachers during the 2005-2006 school year.
- All 28 public Florida colleges and five state universities²⁷ offer a professional preparation program through EPIs. These institutes serve individuals who already have earned at least a baccalaureate degree in a field other than education and are interested in being classroom teachers and receiving professional certification. The college programs using the state-developed, collaborative model are competency-based and designed to address the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices.²⁸ Participants can complete all program requirements within one year, and must pass the Professional Education portion of the Florida Teacher Certification Examination. Institutions may award college or institutional credit to the participants for completing all of

²¹ *Production of Teachers Who Remain in the Classroom Varies by Preparation Program*, OPPAGA, Report 09-28, June 2009. Pursuant to section 1012.56, F.S., a professional certificate is valid for five years, is renewable, and required for teachers who wish to continue teaching in public classrooms.

²² Under section 1012.56, the DOE has reciprocity with other states to grant teaching certificates to persons who held certification in those states.

²³ The State Board of Education, initially approved St. Petersburg, Chipola, and Miami Dade colleges to award 4-year education degrees between 2001 and 2002. Subsequently, it also has approved Edison State College, Northwest State College, Indian River State College, Broward College, Daytona State College, and Florida State College at Jacksonville to also award baccalaureate degrees in education.

²⁴ Graduate programs also provide initial teacher preparation but were not included in the study due to lack of comparability in terms of length, cost, and structure.

²⁵ Section 1012.56(8)(a), F.S.

²⁶ These programs may be part of the alternative certification program managed by the DOE, or may be developed by the school district and approved by the department. The programs range greatly in size from one participant in several districts (Dixie, Levy, and Okeechobee) to 873 in Hillsborough.

²⁷ The five state universities offering an EPI include Florida Atlantic University, Florida Gulf Coast University, the University of Florida, the University of North Florida, and the University of West Florida (UWF). Because UWF was the only state university with an established program in 2005-2006, the study was limited to an analysis of the state colleges.

²⁸ This occurs through four modules, which are taught through seven courses, and two 15-hour field experiences, in which participants demonstrate teaching competencies in a classroom setting, including both teaching and classroom observation and assisting.

the competencies.²⁹ These programs began during the 2005-2006 school year but did not produce new classroom teachers until the following year.

- Individuals can qualify for a teaching certificate without participating in a formal teacher preparation program by documenting that they have met all requirements for a professional certificate. There are several ways individuals can meet the requirements. For example, individuals can submit documentation of at least two semesters of successful full-time teaching at the college level and passing the Subject Area portion of the Florida Teacher Certification Examination, or submit a valid certificate from the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence and demonstrate professional education competencies in the classroom. All of these routes produced five percent of the new Florida teachers during the 2005-2006 school year.
- District alternative certification programs have the highest completion and teacher retention rates, followed by initial teacher preparation programs and the relatively new EPIs.
- All of the preparation program types have implemented strategies to improve outcomes, such as financial aid, career advising, and mentoring programs.
- The differences in completion, placement, and retention rates among Florida's teacher preparation programs partly reflect the substantial differences in the types of students they serve.
 - Students in university educational degree programs tend to be younger and may still be exploring different career paths and may be open to the idea of relocating outside of Florida. As a result, university students may have lower completion rates and placements in a Florida classroom.
 - Students enrolled in programs at one of the Florida colleges often attend on a part-time basis while being employed and may thus be less likely to complete the program within the three-year period examined in the report, which may result in lower completion rates. However, these students tend to be older and have already established permanent connections to the local community making it more likely that they will be employed locally after completing the program.
 - Participants in district alternative certification programs are already employed as classroom teachers and are thus highly motivated to complete the programs to achieve professional certification and retain their employment.³⁰
 - Participants in EPIs are typically older as well and are often mid-career professionals; some of these participants may subsequently determine that teaching is not a good match for their skill sets and interests. Consequently, fewer of these participants may complete the programs or pursue teaching positions.

The report noted that programs currently do not report sufficient information for the state to measure their effectiveness. By requiring programs to track student completion rates and cost information, the state could better understand how effective the different programs are at producing classroom teachers. The report recommends that the DOE require the programs to track and report these outcomes and costs, which would enhance the Legislature's ability to consider the programs' productivity when allocating funds. Additionally, the report recommends that the DOE, in collaboration with the Board of Governors, develop a methodology to determine the cost-effectiveness of the various teacher preparation programs. The analysis should include program outcomes of student cohorts such as completion rates, placement rates in teaching jobs, and retention rates in the classroom. The methodology for determining program costs should use existing expenditure data, when available, to determine the cost of producing a completer that remains in the classroom.³¹

²⁹ Twenty-six of the 28 state colleges use the Collaborative Model for Community College Teacher Preparation. The model includes 295 contact hours, which convert to 21 institutional credits that are used for tuition purposes.

³⁰ Approximately 57 percent of the newly hired Florida public teachers for the 2005-2006 school year held temporary teaching certificates. However, these teachers are not required to participate in a program leading to professional certification. Twenty-eight percent of the 9,736 teachers who started on temporary certificates in 2003-2004 were not successful in attaining a professional certificate before their temporary certificate expired at the end of 2006-2007.

³¹ *Production of Teachers Who Remain in the Classroom Varies by Preparation Program*, OPPAGA, Report 09-28, June 2009.

Teacher Attrition in Florida

Research on teacher attrition conducted by OPPAGA in 2007 concluded that while teachers leave the profession for a variety of reasons, over 40 percent stated that they left because of dissatisfaction or to pursue a different career.³² The major reported areas of dissatisfaction included school governance, student behavior, and limited career opportunities. A subsequent report³³ found that school districts and the DOE have made some progress in ameliorating these factors, such as district professional development programs and the DOE's implementation of the William Cecil Golden Professional Development Program for School Leaders.³⁴ The report recommended that the DOE take additional steps to develop professional development programs that address classroom management.

To address classroom management professional development, the DOE provided targeted assistance to the lowest performing schools in 2008-2009. The DOE regional staff provided technical assistance and interventions to schools with the greatest need.³⁵ The level of support and type of intervention depend upon the unique needs of the school and district. Staff assess the classroom environment to determine if students are on task, classroom activities are orderly, and standards for acceptable student behavior and classroom procedures are established and maintained. Staff also provide or broker school professional development in areas that include positive student behavior, instructional delivery, differentiated instruction, problem solving, and intervention. Approximately 39 schools received direct, onsite support from the regional staff for professional development in these areas in 2008-2009.³⁶

Additional professional development was provided in 2008-2009 to other school personnel throughout the state, including district and school-based administrators, using a multi-tiered intervention framework referred to as Florida's problem-solving and response to instruction/intervention or PS/RtI.³⁷ This approach integrates assessment and intervention in instruction and behavior to improve student achievement and reduce problem behavior.³⁸ One of the RtI initiatives, Positive Behavior Support, assists teachers, administrators, and related services personnel in increasing a school district's ability to address behavioral issues exhibited by students in regular and special education programs.³⁹ Professional development is provided through a partnership between the DOE and the University of South Florida's Positive Behavior Support: Response to Intervention for Behavior Project, using federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds.

³² *Dissatisfaction with School Governance, Student Behavior, Parent Support, and Career Opportunities Lead to Teacher Attrition*, Report No. 07-19, OPPAGA, February 2007.

³³ *Some Progress Achieved in Addressing Factors Contributing to Teacher Attrition*, Report No. 09-11, OPPAGA, February 2009.

³⁴ Section 1012.986, F.S. The program offers professional development resources for principals, including online training modules.

³⁵ Correspondence with DOE, October 1, 2009. In 2008, the U.S. DOE selected Florida to participate in a pilot initiative to streamline the federal and state accountability systems and direct school and subgroup interventions at the school and district level. Subgroups include the major ethnic and racial groups, economically disadvantaged students, limited English proficient students, and students with disabilities. Subsequently, the 2009 Legislature made changes to the state's accountability system to require the DOE to categorize public schools based on the school's grade and the level and rate of change in student performance in reading and mathematics. See ch. 2009-144, L.O.F., codified in ss. 1001.42, 1008.33, 1008.345, and 1012.2315, F.S.

³⁶ *Id.*

³⁷ *Id.*

³⁸ There are multiple RtI frameworks and multiple federal funding sources that may be used to implement these approaches. Funds may be used to improve the academic achievement and behavior of students with or without disabilities and to provide professional development in implementing RtI. See U.S. DOE, *Implementing RTI Using Title I, Title III, and CEIS Funds: Key Issues for Decision-makers*, August 2009, available at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/rtifiles/rti.pdf>, and *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009: Using ARRA Funds Provided Through Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to Drive School Reform and Improvement*, 2009, available at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/guidance/idea-b-reform.pdf>. Florida's plan for statewide integration of RtI initiatives is available at <http://www.florida-rti.org/RtI.pdf>.

³⁹ Correspondence with DOE, October 1, 2009.

Teacher Performance Pay in Florida

The National Council on Teacher Quality's (NCTQ) recent analysis of state teacher policy recognized Florida's policy⁴⁰ of explicitly requiring teacher evaluations to be based primarily on evidence of student learning as a best practice.⁴¹ The NCTQ commended the state for directing local districts to use both subjective and objective measures of student performance, including state assessment data, in their teacher evaluations and for making student performance the preponderant criterion in the teacher evaluation. In addition, Florida was commended for recognizing performance pay and connecting it to student achievement, and for doing it in a manner that allows local districts the flexibility to define criteria by which it is awarded and enabling all teachers to participate, not just those with students who take standardized tests.⁴²

The 2007 Legislature created a voluntary performance pay program, the Merit Award Program (MAP) for instructional personnel and school-based administrators.⁴³ To be eligible for funding, school districts must adopt plans that designate outstanding performers to receive a merit-based pay supplement of at least five percent, but no more than ten percent of the district's average teacher's salary. School districts determine eligibility for the supplement based upon student academic proficiency, learning gains, or both as measured by statewide standardized assessments and local district-determined assessments, as well as other performance factors. At least 60 percent of the overall personnel evaluation must relate to student performance and up to 40 percent must relate to professional practices, including the ability to implement differentiated instruction strategies to meet student needs for remediation or acceleration and the ability of administrators to manage so as to maximize resources used for direct instruction.

The school district's assessment of an instructional personnel staff member must consider the performance of students assigned to his or her classroom or, in the case of co-teaching or team teaching, within his or her academic sphere of responsibility. The assessment of a school-based administrator must consider the performance of students assigned to his or her school.

For school year 2008-2009, 13,784 instructional personnel and school-based administrators were estimated to have received MAP funds.⁴⁴ The estimate is based on the actual funds disbursed and spent (net of district refunds) for 2008-2009.⁴⁵ A total of \$31,245,649 was disbursed to 25 school districts and the Florida Virtual School. In five school districts (Brevard, Duval, Escambia, Hillsborough, and Lee), eligible MAP recipients were employed in both traditional and charter schools. In 18 school districts, eligible MAP recipients were employed in charter schools. The school districts are: Broward, Miami-Dade, Franklin, Glades, Lake, Manatee, Okaloosa, Orange, Osceola, Palm Beach, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Sarasota, Sumter, Volusia, Wakulla, and Walton. In two districts, eligible recipients were employed only in traditional schools (Dixie and Gilchrist).⁴⁶

Policy Considerations

Federal Funding Opportunities

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provides \$4.3 billion for the Race to the Top Fund, a competitive grant program designed to encourage and reward states that are implementing significant education reforms across four education areas: implementing standards and assessments, improving teacher effectiveness and achieving equity in teacher distribution, improving the collection and use of data, and supporting struggling schools.⁴⁷ In addition,

⁴⁰ Section 1012.34(3), F.S.

⁴¹ *State Teacher Policy Yearbook: What States Can Do to Retain Effective New Teachers*, NCTQ, 2008.

⁴² *Id.*

⁴³ Section 1012.225, F.S. Charter schools may participate in the program.

⁴⁴ Correspondence with DOE, October 5, 2009.

⁴⁵ As of October 5, 2009, the DOE was unable to provide the number of 2008-2009 MAP recipients and the amount of each recipient's award. Telephone conversation with DOE staff, October 2, 2009.

⁴⁶ Correspondence with DOE, October 5, 2009.

⁴⁷ ARRA, Public Law 111-5, section 14005(d)(2),(3),(4), and (5). *See also* section 14006 which provides for incentive grants to states that have made significant progress in meeting the objectives in paragraphs (2),(3),(4), and (5) of section 14005(d).

the ARRA requires states to maintain state support for elementary, secondary, and higher education at specific levels for fiscal years 2009, 2010, and 2011.⁴⁸ To receive funds, a state must provide assurance that it will improve teacher effectiveness and comply with the requirements that school programs and targeted assistance schools provide instruction by highly qualified teachers,⁴⁹ that poor and minority students are not taught at higher rates than other students by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers, and that it will evaluate and publicly report progress with respect to these requirements.⁵⁰

The ARRA also provides for other initiatives, including \$2.97 million for competitive grants through the existing Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF), which supports performance-based teacher and principal compensation systems in high need schools, primarily through grants to school districts and consortia of school districts.⁵¹

The U.S. DOE is currently conducting a Race to the Top national competition among states to improve education quality and results statewide. The proposed criteria include the extent to which a state differentiates the effectiveness of teachers and principals and uses this information for decisions on evaluation, compensation, promotion, termination, and tenure.⁵² Under the proposal, teacher and principal effectiveness would be judged in significant measure by student growth.⁵³

In response to the proposed requirements, the Education Commission of the States (ECS) noted that the proposed guidelines for Race to the Top funds leave no formal role for state legislatures in the application process.⁵⁴ The ECS further observed that the absence of legislators from the application approval process could render adoption of key state policies difficult, if not impossible. The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) also advocated for the inclusion of state legislatures in the application process and suggested that each application should require approval from leadership in both chambers of a state's legislature.⁵⁵

Teacher Preparation Program Accountability

According to the National Governor's Association, Louisiana, Mississippi, Ohio, and Tennessee have created data systems that link teacher effectiveness with teacher and principal preparation programs.⁵⁶ Florida has initiated a process to link data elements to improve teacher preparation programs in the state. In June, the DOE provided each postsecondary institution that offers an initial teacher preparation program data detailing the percentage of teachers who had 50 percent or more of their students making learning gains, the percentage of "high performing teachers," based on a value table score of 125 or higher, and an average value table score.⁵⁷ The information was based on 2007-2008

⁴⁸ ARRA, Public Law 111-5, section 14005(d)(1).

⁴⁹ Part A of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as reauthorized by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) established requirements that all teachers of core academic subjects be "highly qualified." This means teachers must generally have a bachelor's degree, be fully certified, and demonstrate their knowledge of the subjects they teach. See 20 U.S.C. sections 6319(a)(1) and 7801(23). In order to receive funding under Part A of Title I, states must comply with its requirements. According to the U.S. DOE, most teachers have been designated as highly qualified under NCLB, but teachers in high-poverty schools had less experience and were less likely to have a degree in the subject that they teach. *State and Local Implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act: Volume VII—Teacher Quality Under NCLB: Final Report*, U.S. DOE, 2009.

⁵⁰ 20 U.S.C. section 6311(b)(8)(C).

⁵¹ U.S. DOE, *Teacher Incentive Fund*, July 2009, available at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/teacherincentive/factsheet.html>.

⁵² The criteria do not specify any minimum number of years for a probationary period for tenure or the process for making employment decisions.

⁵³ Federal Register, Vol. 74, No. 144, July 29, 2009. The U.S. DOE proposes the use of \$4 billion for this initiative and a potential for \$350 million to support the development of assessments by a consortia of states. The comments for the proposed priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria are currently under review by the U.S. DOE.

⁵⁴ Letter from the ECS President to U.S. Secretary of Education, August 21, 2009.

⁵⁵ Letter from the NCSL Chair of the Standing Committee on Education to U.S. Secretary of Education, August 27, 2009.

⁵⁶ *Building a High-Quality Education Workforce: A Governor's Guide to Human Capital Development*, NGA, 2009.

⁵⁷ Correspondence with DOE, September 11, 2009. A value table assigns a score to each possible student outcome. For Florida, the possible outcomes are defined by capturing each student's achievement level from one year to the next on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) in reading/language arts and math for grades 4 through 10.

student learning gains for 2006-2007 completers (teachers) who taught in Florida public schools during the 2007-2008 school year.

Subsequently, each postsecondary institution offering a teacher preparation program was provided with supporting raw data. The data was disaggregated for each institution by program type⁵⁸ and 2006-2007 completers of an initial teacher preparation program.⁵⁹ It also included the school district, school, course taught, and student FCAT performance data. The DOE will provide the same type of information to each school district with an alternative certification program. The DOE intends to provide all postsecondary institutions and districts with student achievement data for 2008-2009 that is tied to the identity of each classroom teacher who completed their program in 2007-2008 and who taught each course in reading/language arts and math in grades 4 through 10 in public schools during the 2008-2009 school year.⁶⁰

For the first time, the postsecondary institutions and districts will have the opportunity to review and analyze the impact of their program completers on student learning. The DOE expects each institution and district, as a condition of continued teacher preparation program approval, to demonstrate that the data is used to improve the program and the performance of individuals who complete the program.

Distribution of Effective Teachers

Another part of the teacher effectiveness equation involves employment decisions about teachers in the classroom. Concerns about the distribution of highly qualified and effective teachers in the nation’s schools, particularly high-poverty and high-minority schools, have intensified the discussion about evaluating teachers and principals and the consequences of unsatisfactory evaluations for chronically ineffective personnel.

For the 2007-2008 school year, the DOE reviewed the following data to determine whether districts are succeeding in ensuring that children in schools that earned a grade of “D” or “F,” which were above the district’s average in minority population or level of poverty, were not taught at higher rates by first year teachers, teachers holding a temporary certificate, or out-of-field teachers.⁶¹ The data shows that high need schools have higher percentages of teachers who are inexperienced, hold a temporary certificate, or are out-of-field, contrary to statutory requirements that teachers with more experience are assigned to high need schools.⁶²

State Level Data Analysis	Schools with a Majority of Minority Students and Students Receiving Free or Reduced-Priced Lunch	Schools with Neither a Majority of Minority Students nor Students Receiving Free or Reduced-Priced Lunch
% First Year Teachers	15%	9%
% Temporary Certified Teachers	18%	13%
% Out-of-Field Teachers	17%	13%

The following tables reflect the distribution of 8,302 National Board Certified Teachers (NBCT)⁶³ in graded schools in 2007-2008. Most (73 percent) were in non-Title I schools and (67 percent) were in “A” schools. Slightly over half of the teachers (54 percent) were in schools with less than 50 percent of the students qualifying for free or reduced-price school lunches under the National School Lunch Act. Of the NBCT teachers, 19 percent were in schools with 75 percent or more minority students, 42 percent were in schools with 50 percent or more minority

⁵⁸ “Program type” means initial teacher preparation programs provided by universities and colleges for individuals seeking a degree, EPIs, and school district alternative certification programs. Correspondence with DOE, September 30, 2009.

⁵⁹ Correspondence with DOE, September 11, 2009.

⁶⁰ *Id.*

⁶¹ E-mail correspondence with DOE, September 14, 2009. Assignment of Teachers and Paraprofessionals Under Differentiated Accountability for Title I and Non-Title I Schools for the 2007-2008 school year, September 4, 2009.

⁶² Section 1012.2315, F.S. (2008). See also 20 U.S.C. s. 6311(b)(8)(C).

⁶³ Pursuant to s. 1012.72, F.S., the purposes of this program are to provide bonuses to teachers who attain certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and who mentor non-NBPTS public school teachers.

students, and 39 percent were in schools with less than 50 percent minority students.⁶⁴

Distribution of National Board Certified Teachers (NBCT) by Title I Status of the School

	Number of NBCT	% of all NBCT in Graded Schools	Number of Schools	Average NBCT per School
Title I Schools	2210	27%	1224	1.81
Non-Title I Schools	6092	73%	1668	3.65
Total	8302		2892	

Distribution of NBCT by School Grade

School Grade	Number of NBCT	% of all NBCT in Graded Schools	Number of Schools	Average NBCT per School
A	5590	67%	1585	3.53
B	1335	16%	542	2.46
C	1006	12%	565	1.78
D	332	4%	155	2.14
F	39	0%	45	0.87
Total	8302		2892	

Distribution of NBCT by Schools Percentage of Free/Reduced Lunch

	Number of NBCT	% of all NBCT in Graded Schools	Number of Schools	Average NBCT per School
Schools with 75% or More of Students on Free/Reduced Lunch	897	11%	697	1.29
Schools with 50% or More of Students on Free/Reduced Lunch	2926	35%	1590	1.84
Schools with Less Than 50% of Students on Free/Reduced Lunch	4479	54%	605	7.40
Total	8302		2892	

⁶⁴ E-mail correspondence with DOE, September 10, 2009. The information is based on 2007-2008 School Grades, available at <http://schoolgrades.fldoe.org>, 2007-2008 Final Title I list, and National Board Certifications through 2006-2007.

Distribution of NBCT by Schools Percentage of Minority Students

	Number of NBCT	% of all NBCT in Graded Schools	Number of Schools	Average NBCT per School
Schools with 75% or More Minority Students	1615	19%	867	1.86
Schools with 50% or More Minority Students	3484	42%	1513	2.30
Schools with Less Than 50% Minority Students	3203	39%	512	6.26
Total	8302		2892	

Some critics assert that evaluations are merely formalities and are not used as an important tool for rewarding good teachers, helping average teachers to improve, and holding weak teachers accountable for poor performance.⁶⁵ Others note that states do virtually nothing to establish teachers' effectiveness in the classroom before awarding them a more permanent employment status—more commonly known as tenure.⁶⁶

The NCTQ set the following goals for states and analyzes their progress in meeting each goal:⁶⁷

- A teacher should be eligible for tenure after a certain number of years of service, but tenure should not be granted automatically at that juncture.
- The state should articulate a process, such as a hearing, that local districts must administer in considering the evidence and deciding whether a teacher should receive tenure.
- Evidence of effectiveness should be the preponderant criterion in tenure decisions.
- The minimum years of service needed to achieve tenure should allow sufficient data to be accumulated on which to base tenure decisions, with five years as the ideal minimum.

Overall, Florida was rated average for the NCTQ goal related to exiting ineffective teachers.⁶⁸ However, the NCTQ noted that Florida does not meet the NCTQ goal of making tenure decisions meaningful and recommended that the state should consider extending the minimum probationary period for tenure to five years, which would allow for the accumulation of sufficient data on teacher effectiveness to support meaningful tenure decisions. The NCTQ observed that no state has an exemplary policy that it can highlight as a best practice for granting tenure.⁶⁹ Nine states met a small part of the goal (Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, New Mexico, and North Carolina). Only Iowa and New Mexico consider evidence of teacher effectiveness when making tenure decisions, although it is not the preponderant criterion.⁷⁰ The NCTQ notes that New York City has taken some significant steps that could serve as a model for both states and districts.⁷¹

⁶⁵ *Perfecting the Formula: Effective Strategies = Educational Success*, Briefing Paper prepared for the 2009 Governor's Education Symposium, June 2009.

⁶⁶ *State Teacher Policy Yearbook: What States Can Do to Retain Effective New Teachers*, NCTQ, 2008.

⁶⁷ *Id.* The NCTQ notes that there are numerous regional studies illustrating how difficult and uncommon is the process of dismissing tenured teachers for poor performance. According to NCTQ, these studies underscore the need for an extended probationary period that would allow teachers to demonstrate their capability to promote student performance.

⁶⁸ *Id.*

⁶⁹ *Id.*

⁷⁰ *Id.* In addition to Florida, 41 other states did not meet the goal.

⁷¹ *Id.*