

# National Highlights Report



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A Special Supplement to *Education Week's*

# QUALITY COUNTS

# 2008



With Support from the Pew Center on the States

## About this Report

The 12th annual edition of *Education Week's Quality Counts* continues the cradle-to-career framework launched in last year's report. But it also reintroduces some of the categories in which we have graded states in the past, though some of the indicators and the grading have changed. The cradle-to-career perspective emphasizes the connections between K-12 education and other systems with which it intersects: preschool education, other social and economic institutions, and further education and training.

To emphasize this approach, the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center last year created two new state-performance measures: the Chance-for-Success Index and the K-12 Achievement Index. These indicators, respectively, capture key learning foundations and outcomes at various stages in a person's life and the performance of the states' public schools. Coupled with that heightened attention to outcomes, the 2007 edition of *Quality Counts* examined a series of policies that states could pursue to better align public education from preschool to postsecondary education and into the workplace.

Even as we introduced those new measures last year, we put two of our traditional policy categories on hold: school finance and efforts to strengthen the teaching profession. We spent the past year revising those indicators to ensure the report reflects the field's best and most current thinking. Both categories have returned for this year's report. Indeed, teaching is the special theme of *Quality Counts 2008*.

Most of the 50-state indicators that appear in *Quality Counts* are based on original data analyses and state-survey data from the EPE Research Center. But we also draw on published information from a number of outside organizations. *Quality Counts* has always evolved over time, adding and subtracting indicators to better capture the most important and timely movements in state education policy. So the report's letter grades should not be compared from year to year. This caveat is particularly salient for *Quality Counts 2008*, given the many changes in the report since 2006, the last time we graded states.

States were awarded overall letter grades based on their ratings across six areas of performance and policy: chance-for-success; K-12 achievement; standards, assessments, and accountability; transitions and alignment; the teaching profession; and school finance. Some states performed consistently well or poorly across the full range of categories. But a closer examination of the rankings reveals that most states posted a strong showing in at least one area. This suggests that while broad evaluations of state performance can be useful, a more thorough reading of the results presented in this National Highlights Report will provide a more nuanced perspective on the educational condition of the nation and of individual states.

Editorial Projects in Education Research Center

January 2008

## About Editorial Projects in Education

**Editorial Projects in Education (EPE)** is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization based in Bethesda, Md. Its primary mission is to help raise the level of awareness and understanding among professionals and the public of important issues in American education. EPE covers local, state, national, and international news and issues from preschool through the 12th grade. Editorial Projects in Education Inc. publishes *Education Week*, America's newspaper of record for precollegiate education, *Teacher Magazine*, [edweek.org](http://edweek.org), and the Agent K-12 employment resource. It also produces periodic special reports on issues ranging from technology to textbooks, as well as books of special interest to educators.

The **EPE Research Center** conducts annual policy surveys, collects data, and performs analyses that appear in the *Quality Counts*, *Technology Counts*, and *Diplomas Count* annual reports. The center also produces independent research reports, contributes original data and analysis to special coverage in *Education Week* and [edweek.org](http://edweek.org), and maintains the Education Counts and EdWeek Maps online data resources.

Cover photographs by Sara D. Davis for Education Week

## QUALITY COUNTS 2008 GRADING SUMMARY

### OVERALL GRADE

The overall grade for *Quality Counts* is the average of the scores for the six graded categories.

The Nation:

Score: **75.9**

Grade: **C**

Online extra

Calculate your own *Quality Counts* grades at

[www.edweek.org/go/qc08/calculator](http://www.edweek.org/go/qc08/calculator)

	How did the average state score?
Chance for success	<b>C+</b>
K-12 achievement	<b>D+</b>
Standards, assessments, and accountability	<b>B</b>
Transitions and alignment	<b>C</b>
The teaching profession	<b>C</b>
School finance	<b>C+</b>

### Quality Counts Grading Breakdown

This table reports the detailed scoring behind the grades for the six major topics examined in *Quality Counts*. Scores for those major categories are the average of the respective subcategory scores.

	U.S. Average		U.S. Average
<b>Chance for success</b>		<b>Transitions and alignment</b>	
<i>Early foundations</i>	81.4	<i>Early-childhood education</i>	78.6
<i>School years</i>	74.8	<i>College readiness</i>	58.4
<i>Adult outcomes</i>	81.6	<i>Economy and workforce</i>	85.3
<b>K-12 achievement</b>		<b>The teaching profession</b>	
<i>Status</i>	62.4	<i>Accountability for quality</i>	72.9
<i>Change</i>	71.5	<i>Incentives and allocation</i>	73.0
<i>Equity</i>	77.9	<i>Building and supporting capacity</i>	73.2
<b>Standards, assessments, and accountability</b>		<b>School finance</b>	
<i>Standards</i>	81.6	<i>Equity</i>	84.9
<i>Assessments</i>	83.9	<i>Spending</i>	70.3
<i>School accountability</i>	85.3		

Grading Curve A (93-100), A- (90-92), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82), C+ (77-79), C (73-76), C- (70-72), D+ (67-69), D (63-66), D- (60-62), F (0-59)

## CHANCE FOR SUCCESS

### The Chance-for-Success Index

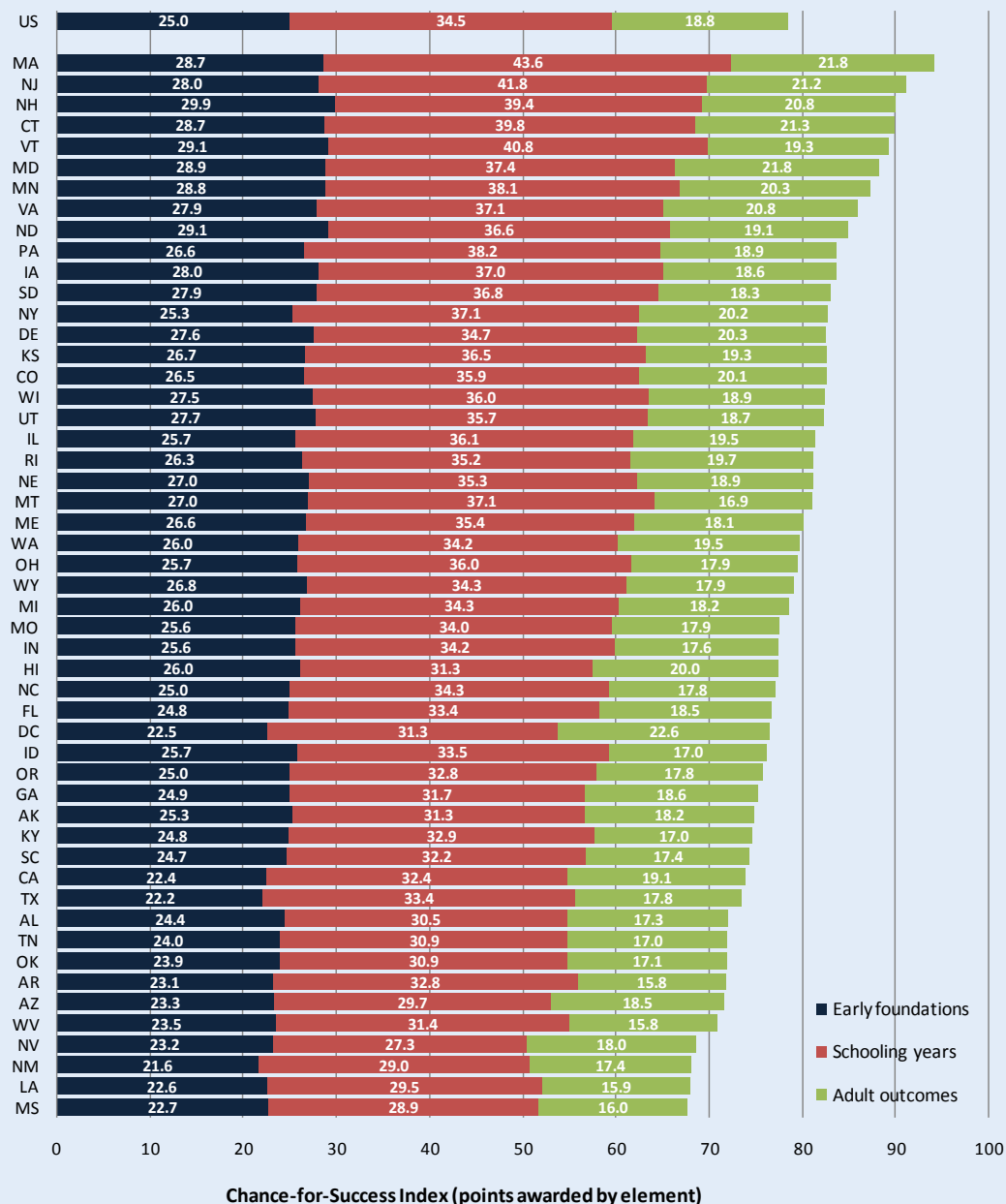
To better understand the part that education plays over a lifetime, the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center has developed the Chance-for-Success Index. Based on an original state-by-state analysis, this index combines information from 13 indicators that span an individual's life from cradle to career. The Chance-for-Success framework allows states to identify strong and weak links in its residents' educational life course – their typical trajectory from childhood through adulthood. More importantly, the index also provides information that could be used to target the efforts of public education systems in ways that better serve students of all ages.

### State Success Indicators

	Top State	Bottom State	National Average
<b>Early Foundations</b>			
<b>Family income</b> Children from families with incomes at least 200% of poverty level (2006)	77.2% (NH)	45.8% (MS)	60.1%
<b>Parent education</b> Children with at least one parent with a postsecondary degree (2006)	58.1 (MA)	29.5 (NV)	43.3
<b>Parental employment</b> Children with at least one parent working full time and year-round (2006)	81.4 (ND)	61.5 (LA)	71.8
<b>Linguistic integration</b> Children whose parents are fluent English speakers (2006)	99.2 (VT)	63.0 (CA)	84.3
<b>The Schooling Years</b>			
<b>Preschool enrollment</b> Three- and 4-year-olds enrolled in preschool (2006)	67.1 (DC)	29.1 (NV)	46.1
<b>Kindergarten enrollment</b> Eligible children enrolled in kindergarten programs (2006)	81.5 (NM)	64.4 (WY)	75.7
<b>Elementary reading</b> Fourth grade public school students proficient on NAEP (2007)	49.2 (MA)	13.8 (DC)	31.7
<b>Middle school mathematics</b> Eighth grade public school students proficient on NAEP (2007)	50.7 (MA)	8.0 (DC)	31.0
<b>High school graduation</b> Public high school students who graduate with a diploma (class of 2004)	83.8 (UT)	53.8 (SC)	69.9
<b>Postsecondary participation</b> Young adults enrolled in postsecondary or with a degree (2006)	66.3 (DC)	35.2 (NV)	51.8
<b>Adult Outcomes</b>			
<b>Adult educational attainment</b> Adults with a two- or four-year postsecondary degree (2006)	52.7 (DC)	25.4 (WV)	37.2
<b>Annual income</b> Adults with incomes at or above national median (2006)	62.6 (MD)	37.1 (MT)	50.1
<b>Steady employment</b> Adults in labor force working full time and year-round (2006)	72.5 (VA)	57.1 (AK)	68.2
<b>SCORE</b>	94.1 (MA)	67.7 (MS)	<b>78.4</b>
<b>GRADE</b>	A	D+	<b>C+</b>

## Providing Opportunities for Success

The Chance-for-Success Index captures the importance of education in a person's lifetime from cradle to career. Its 13 individual indicators span a variety of factors, including preparation in early childhood, the performance of the public schools, and educational and economic outcomes in adulthood. The states are graded using a "best-in-class" rubric, where a score of 100 points on the index would mean that a state ranked first in the nation on each and every indicator. State scores range from 94.1 (Massachusetts, with an A) to 67.7 (Mississippi, with a D-plus). Further examination shows that while early foundations and adult outcomes contribute to the index, formal education (the schooling years) proves to be the driving force behind the state rankings.



# ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY PERFORMANCE

## The K-12 Achievement Index

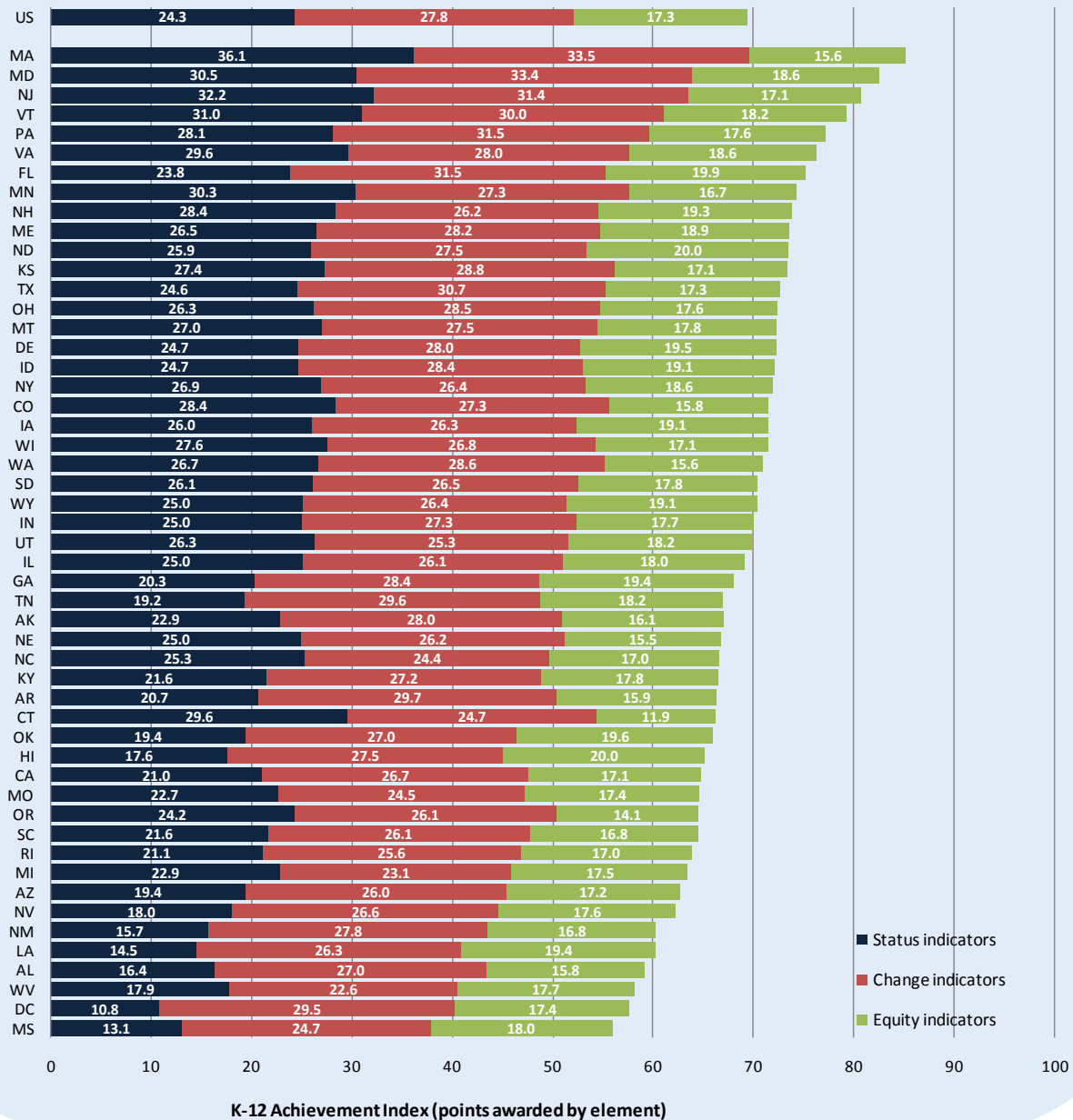
*Quality Counts 2008* expands on the set of achievement indicators used in previous editions of the report. The K-12 Achievement Index examines 18 distinct state achievement measures related to reading and math performance, high school graduation rates, and the results of Advanced Placement exams. The index assigns equal weight to current levels of performance and changes over time. It also places an emphasis on equity, by examining both poverty-based achievement gaps and progress in closing those gaps.

### State Achievement Indicators

	Top State	Bottom State	National Average
<b>Achievement Levels</b>			
<b>4th grade math</b> – Percent proficient on NAEP (2007)	57.6% (MA)	13.5% (DC)	38.6%
<b>8th grade math</b> – Percent proficient on NAEP (2007)	50.7% (MA)	8.0% (DC)	31.0%
<b>4th grade reading</b> – Percent proficient on NAEP (2007)	49.2% (MA)	13.8% (DC)	31.7%
<b>8th grade reading</b> – Percent proficient on NAEP (2007)	43.0% (MA)	12.1% (DC)	29.2%
<b>Achievement Gains</b>			
<b>4th grade math</b> – Scale score change on NAEP (2003-2007)	+10.8 (MA)	-0.4 (NC)	+5.1
<b>8th grade math</b> – Scale score change on NAEP (2003-2007)	+11.4 (MA)	-1.3 (CT)	+4.1
<b>4th grade reading</b> – Scale score change on NAEP (2003-2007)	+9.3 (AL)	-4.0 (WV)	+3.2
<b>8th grade reading</b> – Scale score change on NAEP (2003-2007)	+3.6 (MD)	-4.9 (MS)	-0.3
<b>Poverty Gap</b> (National School Lunch Program, noneligible vs. eligible)			
<b>Reading gap</b> – 4th grade NAEP scale score (2007)	15.9 (ND)	37.8 (CT)	26.8
<b>Math gap</b> – 8th grade NAEP scale score (2007)	15.4 (ND)	36.1 (CT)	26.0
<b>Reading-gap change</b> – 4th grade NAEP (2003-2007), negative value = closing gap	-6.9 (VA)	+9.4 (OR)	-1.1
<b>Math-gap change</b> – 8th grade NAEP (2003-2007), negative value = closing gap	-6.9 (GA)	+4.3 (MT)	-2.4
<b>Achieving Excellence</b>			
<b>Math excellence</b> – Percent advanced on 8th grade NAEP (2007)	14.9% (MA)	1.1% (DC)	6.6%
<b>Change in math excellence</b> - Percent advanced on NAEP (2003-2007)	+6.5% (MA)	-0.1% (DC)	+1.6%
<b>High School Graduation</b>			
<b>Graduation rate</b> – Public schools (class of 2004)	83.8% (UT)	53.8% (SC)	69.9%
<b>Change in graduation rate</b> – Public schools (2000-2004)	+14.7% (TN)	-5.0% (DE)	+3.1%
<b>Advanced Placement</b>			
<b>High AP test scores</b> – Scores of 3 or higher per 100 students (2006)	34.5 (MD)	2.4 (LA)	16.9
<b>Change in AP Scores</b> – Change in high scores per 100 students (2000-2006)	+17.7 (MD)	+0.4 (DC)	+6.0
<b>SCORE</b>	85.2 (MA)	55.9 (MS)	<b>69.4</b>
<b>GRADE</b>	B	F	<b>D+</b>

## Nation Receives Passing Grade on Achievement, But Just Barely

The EPE Research Center's K-12 Achievement Index awards states points based on three distinct aspects of student achievement: current levels of performance, improvements over time, and achievement equity between poor and nonpoor students. The nation as a whole earns 69 points, on a 100-point scale, for a grade of D-plus. The leading state, Massachusetts, earns 85 points and a B. These results suggest that no state excels across all three dimensions of achievement captured by the index. Massachusetts, for example, ranks first in the nation for current achievement levels and improvements, but 47th on equity. Despite below-average current achievement, Florida finishes seventh nationally, a result that can be attributed to very strong improvements in recent years and relatively small poverty gaps.



## STANDARDS, ASSESSMENTS, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

## Policy Indicators

This table reports the number of states that have enacted a particular policy or, as applicable, the number of states with the specified policy enacted for all subject areas or at all grade spans.

Number of states with policy

## Academic Standards

<b>Academic content standards</b> – State has adopted standards in the core subjects (2007-08)	50 states
<b>English/language arts</b> standards are clear, specific, and grounded in content at all levels (2007)	8
<b>Mathematics</b> standards are clear, specific, and grounded in content at all levels (2007)	24
<b>Science</b> standards are clear, specific, and grounded in content at all levels (2007)	22
<b>Social studies/history</b> standards are clear, specific, and grounded in content at all levels (2007)	2
<b>Revision schedule</b> – State has regular timeline for revising standards (2007-08)	38
<b>Supplementary resources</b> – Materials elaborate on standards in all core subjects (2007-08)	43
<b>Supplementary resources</b> – Materials provided for particular student populations (2007-08)	35

## Assessments

## Test items used to measure student performance

<b>Multiple-choice items</b> (2007-08)	50
<b>Short-answer items</b> (2007-08)	29
<b>Extended-response items – English/language arts</b> (2007-08)	45
<b>Extended-response items – Other subjects</b> (2007-08)	24
<b>Portfolios of student work</b> (2007-08)	1

## Alignment of assessments to academic standards

<b>English/language arts</b> (2007-08)	51
<b>Mathematics</b> (2007-08)	50
<b>Science</b> (2007-08)	46
<b>Social studies/history</b> (2007-08)	12

## Assessment systems

<b>Vertically equated</b> scores on assessments in grades 3–8 in English (2007-08)	24
<b>Vertically equated</b> scores on assessments in grades 3–8 in math (2007-08)	24
<b>Formative assessments</b> or item banks provided to educators (2007-08)	21

## School Accountability (policies must apply to Title I and non-Title I schools)

<b>State ratings</b> – State assigns ratings to all schools on criteria other than AYP (2007-08)	26
<b>Statewide student ID</b> – State has a statewide student-identification system (2007-08)	48
<b>Rewards</b> – State provides rewards to high-performing or improving schools (2007-08)	35
<b>Assistance</b> – State provides assistance to low-performing schools (2007-08)	39
<b>Sanctions</b> – State sanctions low-performing schools (2007-08)	32

**GRADE** (average state)

**B**

Key: E= English, M= Math, S= Science, H= History/social studies  
 ES= Elementary school, MS= Middle school, HS= High school



## TRANSITIONS AND ALIGNMENT

### Education Alignment Policies

This table reports the number of states that have enacted a particular policy.

Number of states with policy

#### Early-Childhood Education

<b>Early learning</b> – State early-learning standards aligned with K-12 standards (2007-08)	47 states
<b>School-readiness definition</b> – State formally defines school readiness (2007-08)	13
<b>School-readiness assessment</b> – Readiness of entering students assessed (2007-08)	17
<b>School-readiness intervention</b> – Programs for students not deemed ready (2007-08)	21
<b>Kindergarten standards</b> – Learning expectations aligned with elementary (2007-08)	48

#### Postsecondary Education

<b>College readiness</b> – State defines college readiness (2007-08)	15
<b>College preparation</b> – College prep required to earn a high school diploma (2007-08)	3
<b>Course alignment</b> – Credits for high school diploma aligned with postsecondary system (2007-08)	6
<b>Assessment alignment</b> – High school assessment aligned with postsecondary system (2007-08)	10
<b>Postsecondary decisions</b> – High school assessment used for postsecondary decisions (2007-08)	9

#### Economy and Workforce

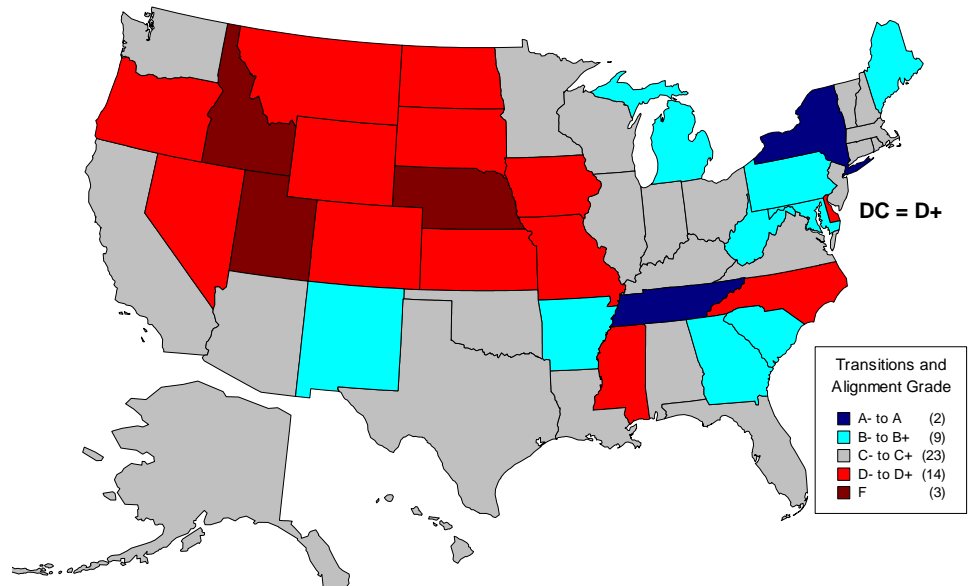
<b>Work readiness</b> – State K-12 system defines work readiness (2007-08)	26
<b>Career-tech diploma</b> – State offers high school diploma with career specialization (2007-08)	36
<b>Industry certification</b> – K-12 has path for industry-recognized certificate or license (2007-08)	40
<b>Portable credits</b> – K-12 pathway to earn career-tech. credits for postsecondary (2007-08)	42

**GRADE (average state) C**

### A National Perspective

The EPE Research Center has examined state efforts to connect the K-12 education system with early learning, higher education, and the world of work. Fourteen key transition and alignment policies are included in *Quality Counts 2008*.

The states with the strongest alignment policies (grades of B or higher) each have at least 10 of the 14 focal policies in place. At the other end of the spectrum, Idaho and Utah have enacted just two such policies, and Nebraska only one.



## THE TEACHING PROFESSION

### Efforts to Improve Teaching

This table reports the number of states that have enacted a particular policy.

Number of states with policy

#### Accountability for Quality

##### Requirements for initial licensure (2007-08)

<b>Substantial coursework</b> in subject area(s) taught	27 states
<b>Test of basic-skills</b>	39
<b>Test of subject-specific knowledge</b>	42
<b>Test of subject-specific pedagogy</b>	6
<b>Student teaching</b> during teacher training	39
<b>Other clinical experiences</b> during teacher training	13

##### Discouraging out-of-field teaching (2007-08)

<b>Parental notification</b> of out-of-field teachers	5
<b>Ban or cap</b> on the number of out-of-field teachers	4

##### Evaluating teacher performance (2007-08)

<b>Formal evaluations</b> of all teachers' performance required	43
<b>Student achievement</b> is tied to teacher evaluations	12
<b>Annual basis</b> for teacher evaluations	12
<b>Evaluators</b> of teachers receive formal training	26

##### Teacher education programs (2007-08)

<b>Rankings/results published</b> for teacher-preparation institutions	30
<b>Programs accountable for graduates' classroom performance</b>	18

##### Data systems to monitor quality (2007)

<b>Unique identification number</b> assigned to each teacher by state	46
<b>Link teacher and student records</b> by course/subject and state assessment results	12

#### Incentives and Allocation

##### Reduction of entry and transfer barriers (2007-08)

<b>Alternative-route program</b> for teacher preparation	47
<b>Teacher-license reciprocity or portability</b> arrangement with other state(s)	38
<b>Teacher-pension portability</b> across state lines	20

##### Salaries and incentives

<b>Teacher-pay parity</b> – Teacher salaries at least equal to comparable occupations (2006)	10
<b>Districts report school-level salaries</b> for teachers (2007-08)	12
<b>Pay-for-performance</b> program rewards teachers for raising student achievement (2007-08)	7
<b>Differentiated roles for teachers</b> formally recognized by state (2007-08)	20
<b>Incentives for teacher-leadership roles</b> (2007-08)	17
<b>Incentives for teachers to earn national-board certification</b> (2007-08)	38

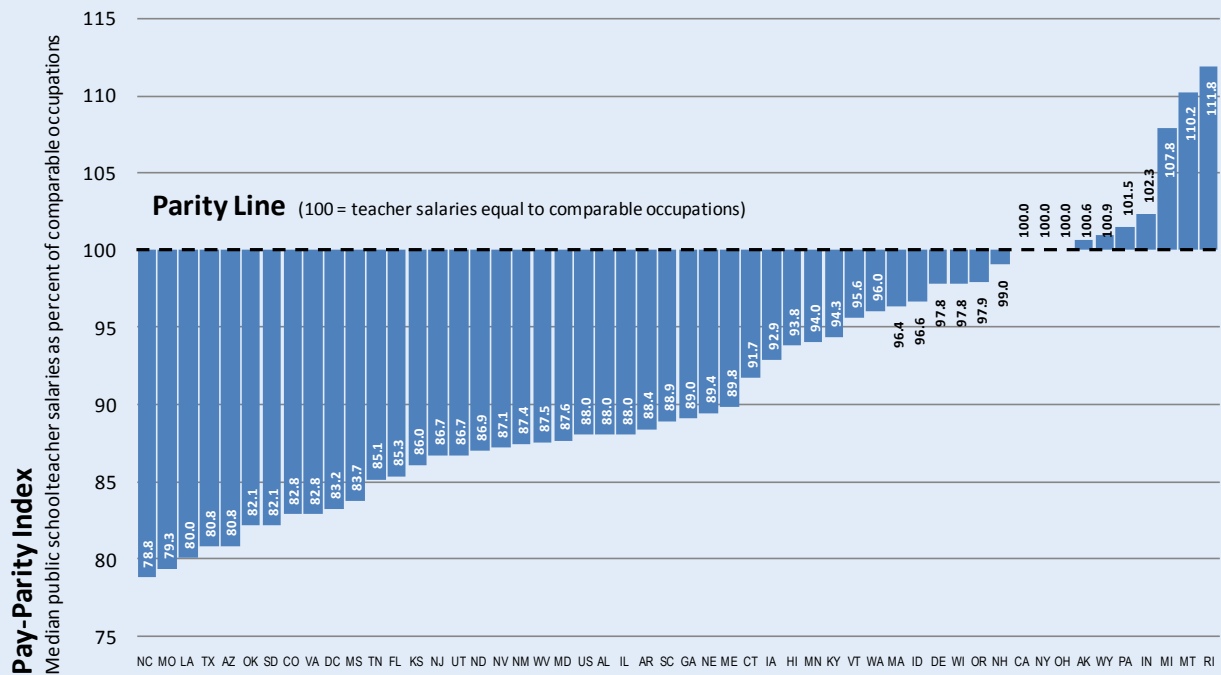
Incentives and Allocation (cont.)	Number of states with policy
Managing and allocating teaching talent (2007-08)	
<b>Fully licensed teachers</b> tracked by state data system, by school-poverty level	42 states
<b>Highly qualified teachers</b> tracked by state data system, by school-poverty level	31
<b>First-year teachers</b> tracked by state data system, by school-poverty level	35
<b>National Board certified teachers</b> tracked by state data system, by school-poverty level	25
<b>Incentives to teachers working in targeted schools</b>	20
<b>Incentives to teachers working in targeted teaching assignment areas</b>	16
<b>Incentives to board-certified teachers working in targeted schools</b>	10
<b>Incentives to principals working in targeted schools</b>	10
Building and Supporting Capacity	
Supports for beginning teachers (2007-08)	
<b>Induction program</b> for all new teachers funded by state	22
<b>Mentoring program</b> for all new teachers funded by state	25
<b>Mentoring program standards</b> for selecting, training, and/or matching mentors	20
<b>Reduced workload</b> for all first-year teachers	2
Professional development (2007-08)	
<b>Formal professional-development standards</b>	41
<b>Professional development financed</b> by state for all districts	24
<b>Districts/schools required to set aside time for professional development</b>	16
<b>Professional development aligned</b> with local priorities	30
School leadership (2006)	
<b>Standards for licensure of school administrators</b>	48
<b>Supervised internship for aspiring principals</b>	28
<b>Induction or mentoring program for aspiring principals</b>	14
School working conditions	
<b>Program to reduce or limit class size</b> implemented by state (2007-08)	18
<b>Student-teacher ratio</b> median in elementary schools is 15:1 or less (2005)	26
<b>State tracks condition of school facilities</b> (2007-08)	22
<b>State reports school-level information on climate and working conditions</b> (2007-08)	3
<b>State imposes penalties for school violence</b> (2007-08)	36
<b>State finances program to reduce school violence</b> (2007-08)	28

GRADE

C

## Reaching the Parity Line

An original analysis by the EPE Research Center finds that public school teachers nationwide make 88 cents for every dollar earned in 16 comparable occupations. Ten states reach or surpass the pay-parity line, meaning teachers earn at least as much as comparable workers.



## Occupations Comparable to K-12 Teachers

- Accountants and auditors
- Architects, except naval
- Archivists, curators, and museum technicians
- Clergy
- Compliance officers, except agriculture, construction, health and safety, and transportation
- Computer programmers
- Conservation scientists and foresters
- Counselors
- Editors, news analysts, reporters, and correspondents
- Human-resources, training, and labor-relations specialists
- Insurance underwriters
- Occupational therapists
- Other teachers and instructors (excludes preschool, K-12, and postsecondary)
- Physical therapists
- Registered nurses
- Technical writers

SOURCE: EPE Research Center, 2008. Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey. Occupational categories adapted from *How Does Teacher Pay Compare?* (Economic Policy Institute, 2004).

## SCHOOL FINANCE

### Equity and Spending Indicators

	Top State	Bottom State	National Average	
<b>Equity (2005)</b>				
<b>Wealth Neutrality Score</b> – Relationship between district funding and local property wealth	-0.185 (AK)	0.288 (VA)	0.085	
<b>McLoone Index</b> – Actual spending as percent of amount needed to bring all students to median level	100.0 (NV)	83.2 (VT)	92.6	
<b>Coefficient of Variation</b> – Amount of disparity in spending across districts within a state	0.058 (WV)	0.334 (AK)	0.147	
<b>Restricted Range</b> – Difference in per-pupil spending levels at the 95th and 5th percentiles	\$1,626 (WV)	\$14,764 (AK)	\$4,725	
<b>Spending (2005)</b>				
<b>Adjusted per-pupil expenditures (PPE)</b> – Analysis accounts for regional cost differences	\$12,252 (NJ)	\$5,463 (UT)	\$8,973	
<b>Students funded at or above national average</b> – Percent of students in districts with PPE at or above U.S. average	100% (NY, WV, WY)	1.1% (UT)	46.1%	
<b>Spending Index</b> – Per-pupil spending levels weighted by the degree to which districts meet or approach the national average for expenditures	100% (NY, WV, WY)	65.7 (UT)	92.7	
<b>Spending on education</b> – State expenditures on K-12 schooling as a percent of state taxable resources	5.2% (VT)	2.2% (DE)	3.6%	
	<b>SCORE</b>	92.5 (WV)	64.8 (AZ)	<b>77.6</b>
	<b>GRADE</b>	A	D	C+

### Definitions of School-Finance Indicators

**Wealth Neutrality Score:** The wealth-neutrality score shows the degree to which state and local revenue are related to the property wealth of districts. A negative score means that, on average, poorer districts actually have more funding per weighted pupil than wealthy districts do. A positive score means the opposite: Wealthy districts have more funding per weighted pupil than poor districts do.

**McLoone Index:** The McLoone Index is based on the assumption that if all students in the state were lined up according to the amount their districts spent on them, perfect equity would be achieved if every district spent at least as much as that spent on the pupil in the middle of the distribution, or the median. The McLoone Index is the ratio of the total amount spent on pupils below the median to the amount that would be needed to raise all students to the median per-pupil expenditure in the state.

**Coefficient of Variation:** The coefficient of variation is a measure of the disparity in funding across school districts in a state. The value is calculated by dividing the standard deviation of adjusted spending per pupil by the state's average spending per pupil. The standard deviation is a measure of dispersion (i.e., how spread out spending levels are across a state's districts). If all districts in a state spent exactly the same amount per pupil, its coefficient of variation would be zero. As the coefficient gets higher, the variation in the amounts spent across districts also gets higher. As the coefficient gets lower, it indicates greater equity.

**Restricted Range:** This indicator captures the differences in funding levels found between the highest- and lowest-spending districts in a state. The index value is calculated as the difference in per-pupil spending levels at the 95th and 5th percentiles. Districts enrolling fewer than 200 students are excluded from the analysis.

**Spending Index:** The Spending Index takes into account both the proportion of students enrolled in districts with spending at the national average, and the degree to which spending is below that benchmark in districts where per-pupil expenditures fall below the national average. Each district in which the per-pupil-spending figure (adjusted for student needs and cost differences) reaches or exceeds the national average receives a score of 1 times the number of students in the district. A district whose adjusted spending per pupil is below the national average receives a score equal to its per-pupil spending divided by the national average and then multiplied by the number of pupils in the district. The spending index is the sum of district scores divided by the total number of students in the state. If all districts spend above the U.S. average, the state attains a perfect index score of 100 points.

Note: The District of Columbia and Hawaii are single-district jurisdictions. As a result it is not possible to calculate measures of financial equity, which capture the distribution of funding across districts within a state. The District of Columbia and Hawaii do not receive grades for school finance and are not included in the rankings reported in this table.

## NOTES AND SOURCES

### Quality Counts 2008

This year's 12th edition of the annual report from *Education Week* explores the most critical factor for improving student learning – high-quality teaching. *Quality Counts 2008* examines strategies that states can use to unlock the full potential of the teaching profession through policies that focus on: accountability for quality and results; incentives to attract and keep high-quality teachers; targeting teaching talent to high-needs schools and building capacity for effective teaching. *Quality Counts 2008* also grades the states based on performance and policy in six distinct areas: chance for success; achievement of K-12 schools; standards, assessments, and accountability; transitions and alignment; the teaching profession; and school finance. *Quality Counts 2008* can be accessed online at [www.edweek.org/go/qc08](http://www.edweek.org/go/qc08).

The *State Highlights Reports* provide state-specific summaries of key findings from *Quality Counts 2008*. Reports for the 50 states and the District of Columbia are available on the Web at [www.edweek.org/go/qc08/shr](http://www.edweek.org/go/qc08/shr).

### Indicator Sources

*Quality Counts 2008* provides information on more than 150 different state-by-state indicators, spanning six categories of educational policymaking and performance. The majority of these 50-state indicators are based on original analyses and state-survey data from the EPE Research Center. In some cases, however, we also draw on published information from a number of outside organizations.

The methodology section of the full report provides detailed descriptions of our indicators and procedures for grading the states. That information can be accessed online at [www.edweek.org/go/qc08](http://www.edweek.org/go/qc08).

Between August and November of 2007, the EPE Research Center conducted an original survey of state education agencies and the District of Columbia public schools. This survey provided information for most of our

state policy measures. Indicators derived from other sources are noted below.

### Chance for Success

**Elementary Reading and Middle School Mathematics:** 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) State assessment. U.S. Department of Education, 2007.

**High School Graduation:** Cumulative Promotion Index, calculated using the U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data, 2003-04. EPE Research Center, 2007.

**Other Indicators:** EPE Research Center analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, 2006.

### K-12 Achievement

**Reading and Mathematics Achievement:** 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) State assessment. U.S. Department of Education, 2007.

**High School Graduation:** Cumulative Promotion Index, calculated using the U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data, 2003-04. EPE Research Center, 2007.

**Advanced Placement:** EPE Research Center analysis of data from the College Board's AP Summary Reports and the U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data, 2006.

### Standards, Assessments, and Accountability

**State has standards that are clear, specific, and grounded in content:** American Federation of Teachers, unpublished review, October-November 2007.

**Assessment item types and alignment to state standards:** EPE Research Center review of testing calendars and other materials from state education agency Web sites, 2007.

**State has a statewide student-identification system:** Data Quality Campaign, 2007.

**Other Indicators:** EPE Research Center annual state policy survey, 2007.

### Transitions and Alignment

**All Indicators:** EPE Research Center annual state policy survey, 2007.

### The Teaching Profession

**Data Systems to Monitor Quality:** Data Quality Campaign, 2007.

**Teacher-Salary Parity:** EPE Research Center analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, 2005 and 2006.

**Pay for Performance:** Education Commission of the States' Redesigned Teacher Compensation Database (fall 2006), updated by *Education Week* (fall 2007).

**School Leadership:** Council of Chief State School Officers, Key State Education Policies on K-12 Education report (2006). Results for the District of Columbia compiled by the EPE Research Center (fall 2007).

**Student-Teacher Ratio:** EPE Research Center analysis of U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data, 2005-06.

**Other Indicators:** EPE Research Center annual state policy survey, 2007.

### School Finance

**Equity and Spending:** The EPE Research Center conducted an original analysis to calculate eight distinct school-finance indicators. Data for these analyses were obtained from a variety of sources, including: U.S. Census Bureau's Public Elementary-Secondary Education Finance Data for 2005; U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data 2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06 (district-level data); National Center for Education Statistics' Geographic Cost of Education Index 1993-94; U.S. Census Bureau's Small-Area Income and Poverty Estimates 2004; U.S. Department of Education's School District Demographics data, based on the 2000 U.S. Census; National Center for Education Statistics, Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: School Year 2004-05 (Fiscal Year 2005), April 2007; and 2005 gross-state-product data from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis. ■

# Quality Counts

State by state Year after year

After more than a decade, *Quality Counts* remains the most trusted and definitive source for information on state efforts to improve public education. Year after year, educators, administrators, and policymakers rely on *Quality Counts* for insightful, unbiased analysis of the issues shaping American education.



## JANUARY 2008

### QUALITY COUNTS 2008: Tapping Into Teaching

The 12th edition of the annual report from *Education Week* explores the most critical factor for improving student learning — high-quality teaching. *Quality Counts 2008* examines strategies that states can use to unlock the full potential of the teaching profession.

#### Highlights from this year's report include:

A new framework for strengthening the **Teaching Profession** focusing on:

- Accountability** for quality and results
- Incentives** to attract and keep high-quality teachers
- Targeting** teaching talent to high-needs schools
- Building capacity** for effective teaching

Cradle-to-Career perspective on the importance of education throughout a person's lifetime, including 50-state ratings on:

- Chance-for-Success Index**
- K-12 Achievement Index**

State of the States — our comprehensive annual review of state policy, from academic standards to school finance

#### Online Extras

**State Highlights Reports** — individualized reports featuring state-specific findings from *Quality Counts*

**Live Online Chats** — with leading national authorities and experts from *Education Week* and the EPE Research Center

**Education Counts** — access hundreds of state indicators from *Quality Counts* using our exclusive online database



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