

EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS FROM A STATE LEGISLATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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Why State Legislatures Care About Educator Effectiveness



- Their state constitution says they have to.
- The strength of the public schools closely relates to the overall well-being of the state.
- Incremental change is the usual path.

Enter Race to The Top



- Carrot\$ instead of sticks.
- Reform goals in 4 areas, with most emphasis (138 of 500 points) on “Great Teachers and Leaders.”
- 23 states passed legislation or amended regulations prior to submitting applications.
- Phase 1: 40 states applied, 15 states and Washington, D.C. as finalists. Two winners.

Tennessee



- Phase 1 winner: \$500 million.
- 444 points total. 114 of 138 points average total score for “Great Teachers and Leaders.”
- “By passing the Tennessee First to the Top Act of 2010, the applicant has recently unlocked statutory barriers to using data for key employment decisions for teachers...”

Tennessee's Legislative Action



- Senate Bill 2133 (2009) – lifted the cap on the number of charter schools (from 50 to 90), expanded student eligibility for charter enrollment, and increased the length of charter agreements from 5 years to 10.

Tennessee's Legislative Action



- Senate Bill 5 (2010) – Passed in special session.
 - ▣ Requires annual evaluations of teachers and principals.
 - ▣ Lifts prohibition on using TVAAS data in evaluating teachers and principals.
 - ▣ Allows TVAAS data to be used in tenure decisions
 - ▣ Establishes new teacher and principal evaluation framework requiring that 50% of evaluations be based on student achievement (35% on TVAAS).

New York



- Ranked 15th in Phase 1, zoomed up to 2nd place in Phase 2.
- Earned 81% of points on Great Teachers and Leaders in Phase 1, increasing to 92% in Phase 2.
- Solid gains (16.5 pts.) on (D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance.
- “The state has recently passed a new law requiring the design and implementation of rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems...”

New York's Legislative Action



- Chapter 103 of the Laws of 2010
 - Added “student growth” as a 9th element among criteria for evaluation.
 - Establishes evaluations as a “significant factor” in employment decisions.
 - Sets new performance ratings categories.
 - Establishes the concept of a “composite” score.
 - Other provisions (e.g., evaluator training, expedited disciplinary hearings).

Maryland



- Did not participate in Phase 1.
- 7th place, 2nd only to MA/NY (tie) in the % of points for Great Teachers and Leaders (91%).
- “At first look, [school district participation] would seem to be relatively weak commitment with potential impact only for urban schools. However, the legislature passed the Education Reform Act of 2010 that...puts in law requirements that, among others, requires student growth to be a significant component of performance evaluations.”

Maryland Legislative Actions



- Education Reform Act of 2010
 - Directs State Board of Education to propose regulations that define the general evaluation standards.
 - Assigns county school boards the task of setting performance criteria for teachers.
 - Requires student growth to be a “significant” factor, but limits any one criterion to 35%.

Maryland Legislative Actions

- MD Council for Educator Effectiveness: identify specific evaluation criteria.
 - Teachers: 30% based on student growth determined by state, 20% student growth determined by local system = 50%.
- New evaluation system was to have been piloted in January 2011, and to have gone into effect 2012-13 school year.
- AELR rejected proposal in November 2010; 6-month extension to revise proposal

The Take Aways



- There is no royal road to state legislative involvement in educator effectiveness.

- State legislatures' involvement:
 - ▣ Can be highly prescriptive or more indirect.
 - ▣ Can work through the authority granted to others.
 - ▣ Can evolve -- center more on funding as implementation takes place.

The Take Aways



- No legislative consensus on effectiveness (mix of state and local assessments and other criteria).
 - MD = 35%? 50%?
 - NY = 40%
 - TN = 50%
- Support for a top down framework with local level flexibility.
- Implementation realities.
- 35 states walked away empty handed.

Thank you.



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