

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE: Jan. 9, 2008, 9:30 a.m. EST

CONTACT: Vanessa Lillie (202) 955-9450 ext. 319, [villie@communicationworks.com](mailto:villie@communicationworks.com)  
Kari Hudnell (202) 955-9450 ext. 324, [khudnell@communicationworks.com](mailto:khudnell@communicationworks.com)

## Report Card Grades States on Education Performance, Policy; Gives Low Marks on Efforts to Improve Teaching

### *Special Analysis Finds That Teachers Earn Significantly Less Than Those in Comparable Professions*

#### Report Cards and Highlights Reports Issued for all 50 States and D.C.

WASHINGTON—January 9, 2008—*Education Week* launched a new report card today, grading the states across six areas of education performance and policy. While the U.S. posted a grade of C overall, the average state earned a D-plus on public school achievement, the poorest showing of any graded category. Marks were also low for state efforts to improve teaching, where 10 states earned a grade of D or lower.

One of the six areas included in *Education Week's* report card, the teaching grades cover state efforts to increase accountability, provide incentives for talented people to enter and stay in the profession, monitor and allocate the distribution of talent, and build the capacity of teachers and principals to improve student learning. South Carolina earned the highest grade in the category, an A-minus.

In addition, a new analysis by the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, which is used as part of the state report card, finds that the average U.S. public school teacher makes only 88 cents for every dollar earned by individuals in 16 comparable professions, such as accountants, architects, occupational therapists, and registered nurses.

The analysis is included in the report, *Quality Counts 2008: Tapping Into Teaching, Unlocking the Key to Student Success*, which also found that workers in other occupations have a greater chance to earn above-average salaries than teachers, whose wages are more compressed. A state-by-state assessment shows that teacher earnings fail to reach the parity mark in 40 states and the District of Columbia. The least-competitive teacher salaries were found in North Carolina and Missouri, where earnings are less than 80 percent of those for comparable workers.

“Quality teaching matters more to student learning than anything else schools do,” said Christopher B. Swanson, the director of the EPE Research Center. “Yet the importance of teachers is not adequately reflected in either their salaries or their career trajectories over time, and it is clear that states could be doing far more to address the issue.”

As part of the report, produced with support from the Pew Charitable Trust's Center on the States, *Education Week* also developed a new framework for strengthening the teaching profession, based on a yearlong analysis of the best thinking and current practices in the field, finding that states could be doing much more than they are now (see attached summary).

#### A Progress Report on Performance

In addition to the teaching grades (where the nation received a C), *Education Week's* report card includes grades for five other areas of educational policy and performance—chance for success (C-plus); achievement of K-12 schools (D-plus); standards, assessment, and accountability (B); transitions and alignment (C); and school finance (C-plus).

Some states perform consistently well or poorly across the full range of categories, but a closer examination of the rankings reveals that most states post a strong showing in at least one area. The report was designed to be

a useful tool in providing a broad evaluation of state performance and to offer a more nuanced perspective on the educational condition of the nation and of the 50 states.

“Retaining educated talent and maintaining a good track record in overall performance and quality of education programs is critical to a state’s future economic health,” said Susan Urahn, managing director of the Pew Center on the States. “Children adequately prepared in youth make more productive workers and more informed citizens—in short they lead more successful lives.”

In the first of the report card’s performance categories, the EPE Research Center’s “**Chance-for-Success Index**” provides a cumulative look at the importance of education in a person’s life from birth through adulthood. The index covers a set of 13 indicators highlighting whether young children get off to a good start, succeed in elementary and secondary school, and hit key educational and income benchmarks as adults. No state earned a perfect score, though several did very well. Massachusetts leads the nation with the only A, followed by New Jersey, New Hampshire, and Connecticut, each earning an A-minus.

States are also graded on a “**K-12 Achievement Index**” that focuses specifically on student learning in elementary through high school. The achievement index evaluates how well a state’s students perform compared with those in the top-ranked state on 18 separate indicators. The index takes into account current state performance, improvements over time, and poverty-based achievement gaps. Massachusetts again leads the nation, earning 82.5 points and a B. Maryland was the only other state to receive a B, while New Jersey earned a B-minus. The report found severe poverty disparities in many of the top-achieving states.

*Quality Counts 2008* also grades the states in the following three areas:

- **Standards, Assessments, and Accountability:** With an average grade of a B, states make a stronger showing in this area than in any other graded category. Indiana, Louisiana, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia earned an A. Ten states earned an A-minus. An analysis conducted by the EPE Research Center in 2006 found a positive relationship between states with strong standards, assessments, and accountability systems and gains on the National Assessment of Educational Progress.
- **Transitions and Alignment:** This category tracks whether states have adopted a definition of school readiness, require all high school students to complete a college-preparatory curriculum to earn a diploma, and have adopted definitions of college and workforce readiness. The top states—Arkansas, Georgia, Maryland, Michigan, New York, Tennessee, and West Virginia—have implemented at least 10 of the 15 alignment policies tracked by the grades.
- **School Finance:** A revised school finance section grades states on school spending and the equitable distribution of resources. The eight measures of equity and spending that appear represent some of the most commonly used indicators in school finance research. This year, only West Virginia earned an A, while New Jersey earned an A-minus.

### Special Web-Only Features Available at [edweek.org](http://edweek.org)

- The full *Quality Counts 2008* report and online-only commentaries by key education researchers, policymakers, and practitioners on ways to strengthen the teaching profession: [www.edweek.org/go/qc08](http://www.edweek.org/go/qc08).
- “State Highlights Reports” for every state feature detailed, state-specific data on the Chance-for-Success and K-12 Achievement indices, as well as the other areas in which states receive grades: [www.edweek.org/go/qc08/shr](http://www.edweek.org/go/qc08/shr).
- A “Grading Calculator” lets readers calculate grades for states based on weighting schemes that they devise themselves: [www.edweek.org/go/qc08/calculator](http://www.edweek.org/go/qc08/calculator)
- Two online discussions about *Quality Counts 2008* at [www.edweek.org](http://www.edweek.org) on Friday, January 11, and Wednesday, January 16, at 3 p.m. EST.

# # #

*The EPE Research Center is the research division of the Bethesda, Md.-based nonprofit Editorial Projects in Education. The Research Center conducts policy surveys and collects data for the Quality Counts, Diplomas Count, and Technology Counts annual reports and maintains the Education Counts and EdWeek Maps online databases. It contributes research and data to Education Week and edweek.org. The EPE Research Center is on the Web at [www.edweek.org/rc](http://www.edweek.org/rc).*

*The Pew Charitable Trusts applies the power of knowledge to solve today’s most challenging problems. The Pew Center on the States identifies and advances effective policy approaches to critical issues facing the states. Online at [www.pewcenteronthestates.org](http://www.pewcenteronthestates.org).*

# Quality Counts 2008:

## A New Framework for Strengthening the Teaching Profession

As part of its special report on teaching, *Education Week's Quality Counts 2008* introduces a new framework for strengthening the teaching profession, based on a yearlong analysis of the best thinking and current practices in the field. Among the study's findings, based on a survey of the 50 states and the District of Columbia:

- Most states require prospective teachers to pass basic-skills and subject-knowledge tests to earn a teaching license. But only five states—Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, and New Mexico—require all schools to notify parents when their child is in a class taught by a teacher without a license in that subject.
- Most states now require prospective teachers to have a major or its equivalent in the subjects they plan to teach. But states have exerted less quality control when it comes to teacher-preparation programs. Thirty states rate such programs based on the percent of their graduates who pass state licensing exams, and 18 states hold teacher-preparation programs accountable for the performance of their graduates in the classroom.
- States also have been less active in ensuring rigorous, regular evaluations of teachers' on-the-job performance. While 43 states require all teachers to be formally evaluated, only 26 require formal training for those who do the evaluations, 12 require that those evaluations occur at least annually, and 12 base teachers' evaluations at least partly on the achievement of their students.
- A majority of states now have data systems that are able to track teacher qualifications and assignments. But only 12 states can match teachers' records with those of their students' courses and test results—a prerequisite for measuring teachers' effectiveness in raising achievement.

### Examining Incentives to Teach

*Quality Counts 2008* highlights a number of new indicators that look at incentives to attract and keep people in the teaching profession. Just seven states are currently experimenting with **pay-for-performance programs**, which reward teachers based, at least in part, on gains in student achievement. Only 17 states provide incentives or rewards to teachers who take on leadership roles outside the classroom.

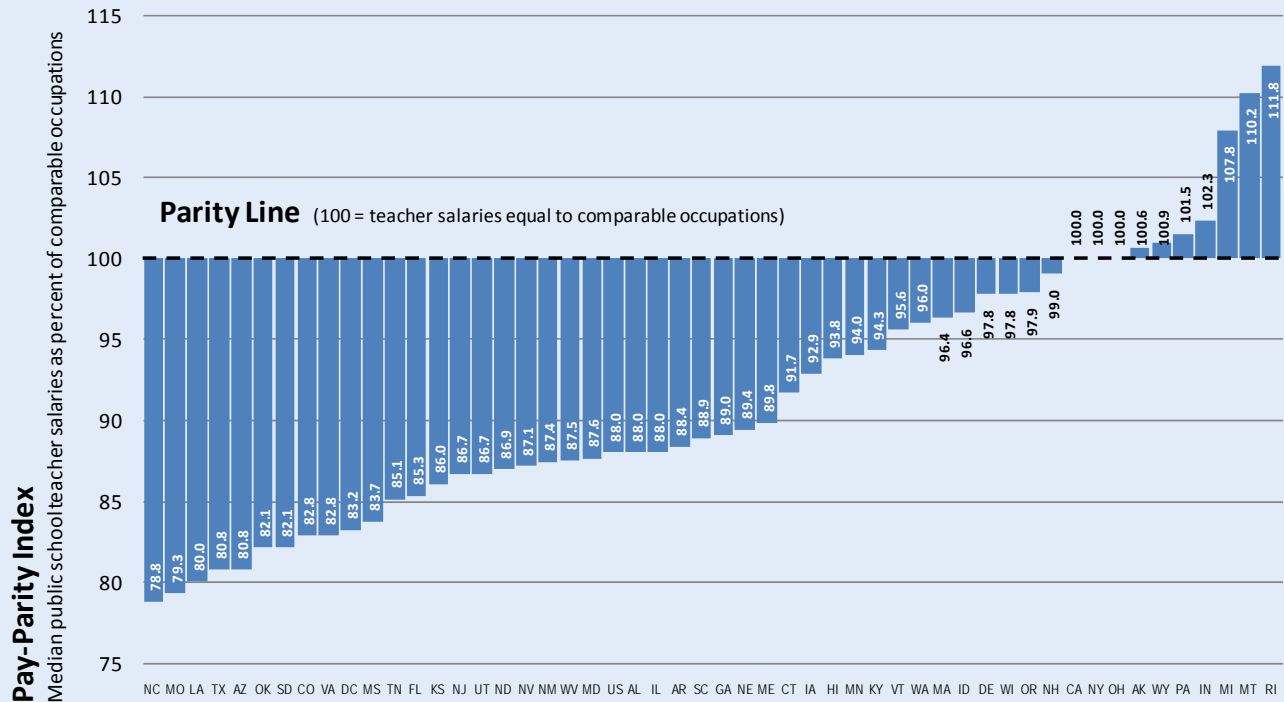
States have become more active in providing teachers with **incentives to work in hard-to-staff schools or subjects**. Sixteen states provide incentives for teachers to work in such shortage fields as mathematics and science. And 20 states provide incentives to attract teachers to hard-to-staff schools.

While research consistently shows that **the quality of school leadership** is second only to the quality of teaching in its impact on student achievement, only 10 states provide incentives to school principals to work in hard-to-staff schools. Teachers also frequently cite school leadership as one of the most important factors in determining where they'll teach. But while many states provide induction or mentoring programs for new teachers (22 and 25, respectively), only 14 states require similar programs for new school principals.

Thirty states and the District of Columbia have data systems that can track the number of **"highly qualified" teachers** in high- vs. low-poverty schools; the federal No Child Left Behind Act requires states to calculate the number of classes in core academic subjects taught by highly qualified teachers, but not to track such information for individual teachers. Only North Carolina and South Carolina provide a reduced workload for novice teachers during their first year in the classroom.

# 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).

# Grading Summary

	OVERALL STATE GRADE		Chance for Success	K-12 Achievement	Standards, Assessment, And Accountability	Transitions And Alignment	Teaching Profession	School Finance
	Grade	Total score <sup>1</sup>						
New York	B	84.9	B	C-	A	A	C+	B+
Massachusetts	B	84.0	A	B	A-	C	C	B-
Maryland	B	83.5	B+	B	B	B+	C-	B
New Jersey	B-	82.4	A-	B-	B-	C+	C	A-
Virginia	B-	82.3	B	C	A	C+	B-	C+
West Virginia	B-	80.8	C-	F	A	B+	C+	A
Ohio	B-	80.6	B-	C-	A	C+	C+	B-
Arkansas	B-	80.5	C-	D	B+	B	B+	B-
South Carolina	B-	80.4	C	D	A	B-	A-	C
Pennsylvania	B-	80.3	B	C+	C+	B-	C+	B-
Georgia	B-	80.2	C	D+	A-	B	B	C+
Indiana	B-	79.7	C+	C-	A	C+	C-	B
Vermont	B-	79.5	B+	C+	B-	C-	C-	B+
Florida	C+	79.2	C+	C	A-	C+	B	C-
Wisconsin	C+	78.3	B-	C-	C+	C-	C+	B+
Tennessee	C+	78.0	C-	D+	A-	A	C	C-
Delaware	C+	78.0	B	C-	B+	D	C+	B
Michigan	C+	77.8	C+	D	A-	B	D+	B-
Connecticut	C+	77.6	A-	D	C	C	C-	B+
Maine	C+	77.5	B-	C	C+	B-	D	B+
Louisiana	C	76.5	D+	D-	A	C	B	C+
Kentucky	C	76.4	C	D+	B+	C	B-	C
Texas	C	75.9	C	C	B+	C+	C	C-
North Carolina	C	75.8	C+	D+	B+	D+	B	C-
Minnesota	C	75.8	B+	C	C	C-	D+	C+
Alabama	C	75.7	C-	F	A-	C+	B-	C
New Hampshire	C	75.6	A-	C	C	C-	D	C+
Oklahoma	C	75.5	C-	D	A-	C	B-	D+
Iowa	C	75.3	B	C-	D+	D+	B-	B-
New Mexico	C	75.2	D+	D-	A-	B-	C+	C
Rhode Island	C	75.2	B-	D	B+	C-	D	B
Hawaii	C	74.8	C+	D	B-	C-	C+	NA
North Dakota	C	74.2	B	C	C	D+	D+	C
Washington	C	73.9	B-	C-	B-	C-	C	D+
Illinois	C	73.4	B-	D+	C+	C-	D+	C
California	C	73.4	C	D	A-	C-	C-	D+
Kansas	C	73.3	B	C	C+	D-	D+	C+
Colorado	C	73.1	B	C-	B-	D	D+	C-
Wyoming	C	72.8	C+	C-	C+	D-	D-	B
Missouri	C-	72.1	C+	D	C	D+	C	C
South Dakota	C-	71.8	B	C-	C+	D-	D	C
Arizona	C-	71.6	C-	D	A-	C-	D+	D
Alaska	C-	70.9	C	D+	B	C-	D-	D+
Utah	C-	70.7	B-	C-	C+	F	C-	D
Montana	C-	70.7	B-	C-	C-	D-	D+	C-
Nevada	D+	69.4	D+	D-	C+	D+	C-	D+
Nebraska	D+	69.3	B-	D+	D	F	D+	B-
Mississippi	D+	68.9	D+	F	B	D+	D	C-
Oregon	D+	68.6	C	D	C+	D	F	C-
Idaho	D+	68.4	C	C-	C	F	D	D
District of Columbia	D+	68.1	C	F	C+	D+	D-	NA
U.S.	C	75.9	C+	D+	B	C	C	C+

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.

1. The total score is the average of scores across the six individual categories. Each category receives equal weight in the overall grade.



# Chance for Success

	CHANCE-FOR-SUCCESS INDEX							
	Grade	Total Score	Family Income	Parent Education	Parental Employment	Linguistic Integration	Preschool Enrollment	Kindergarten Enrollment
			Percent of children in families with incomes at least 200% of poverty level	Percent of children with at least one parent with a postsecondary degree	Percent of children with at least one parent working full time and year-round	Percent of children whose parents are fluent English-speakers	Percent of 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in preschool	Percent of eligible children enrolled in kindergarten programs
Massachusetts	A	94.1	73.8	58.1	73.5	86.8	60.5	74.7
New Jersey	A-	91.0	74.1	53.5	75.6	82.1	63.7	75.0
New Hampshire	A-	90.1	77.2	56.1	77.4	96.2	48.6	78.5
Connecticut	A-	89.8	75.1	54.7	75.7	88.0	57.1	75.6
Vermont	B+	89.3	69.2	57.4	73.4	99.2	55.4	79.4
Maryland	B+	88.2	75.3	52.9	77.3	91.0	50.8	78.5
Minnesota	B+	87.2	71.0	55.9	76.6	91.7	40.7	73.5
Virginia	B	85.9	69.5	50.6	77.5	90.5	47.9	76.2
North Dakota	B	84.8	63.1	57.0	81.4	98.2	29.2	75.5
Pennsylvania	B	83.7	62.6	46.8	72.6	94.1	46.2	71.8
Iowa	B	83.6	65.5	51.7	77.3	94.4	41.6	73.2
South Dakota	B	82.9	61.1	52.9	77.2	96.5	42.3	80.0
New York	B	82.6	60.8	48.4	70.6	80.0	56.2	77.0
Delaware	B	82.6	68.7	47.1	78.6	91.6	43.4	77.8
Kansas	B	82.6	61.8	47.0	77.0	91.3	41.2	74.1
Colorado	B	82.5	64.4	49.6	73.8	84.6	42.9	74.1
Wisconsin	B-	82.4	66.4	48.4	76.1	93.7	39.3	73.4
Utah	B-	82.2	62.6	54.3	78.1	88.8	36.7	78.6
Illinois	B-	81.3	63.8	46.0	72.4	82.2	50.1	76.2
Rhode Island	B-	81.1	66.9	48.4	73.1	81.9	42.1	78.2
Nebraska	B-	81.1	60.8	49.4	77.9	90.3	35.3	71.4
Montana	B-	81.0	57.1	52.6	71.0	98.8	43.8	81.2
Maine	B-	80.1	60.5	47.4	71.7	97.4	36.5	80.0
Washington	B-	79.6	64.2	48.0	70.9	84.2	39.0	73.3
Ohio	B-	79.6	60.7	41.8	70.3	96.6	42.1	73.2
Wyoming	C+	79.0	64.9	46.0	71.3	96.9	40.3	64.4
Michigan	C+	78.6	62.1	45.2	69.5	93.9	45.5	72.7
Missouri	C+	77.5	57.7	42.4	71.9	96.1	41.5	76.0
Indiana	C+	77.4	61.0	40.5	72.3	94.7	38.8	71.6
Hawaii	C+	77.4	67.0	48.5	69.8	82.1	53.3	72.8
North Carolina	C+	77.1	55.7	42.8	70.4	91.5	47.6	76.8
Florida	C+	76.6	58.4	43.2	73.6	81.2	49.8	75.9
District of Columbia	C	76.4	47.8	36.4	61.8	92.0	67.1	76.2
Idaho	C	76.2	57.5	45.5	72.9	90.9	31.7	74.7
Oregon	C	75.6	60.3	43.5	70.3	85.1	38.6	71.4
Georgia	C	75.2	57.2	41.1	71.5	90.5	50.8	77.3
Alaska	C	74.8	70.5	39.9	62.3	91.5	38.3	73.9
Kentucky	C	74.7	56.4	39.0	68.6	97.5	40.9	73.0
South Carolina	C	74.3	54.9	38.9	70.4	95.5	47.7	80.1
California	C	73.9	58.6	38.3	69.9	63.0	48.5	76.6
Texas	C	73.3	50.7	35.7	70.9	73.4	41.5	79.1
Alabama	C-	72.1	53.8	37.2	69.7	96.8	44.6	76.7
Tennessee	C-	71.9	53.2	36.3	68.2	95.5	36.4	74.5
Oklahoma	C-	71.9	51.2	37.9	69.5	93.2	41.8	73.8
Arkansas	C-	71.7	49.4	33.2	68.9	94.3	51.1	74.2
Arizona	C-	71.5	54.8	37.2	74.4	75.5	32.3	74.6
West Virginia	C-	70.8	51.7	34.1	65.7	98.9	34.4	81.4
Nevada	D+	68.5	62.6	29.5	76.2	75.0	29.1	80.8
New Mexico	D+	68.0	46.7	34.5	66.0	79.9	38.3	81.5
Louisiana	D+	67.9	50.3	32.0	61.5	96.9	49.6	74.1
Mississippi	D+	67.7	45.8	34.5	63.6	97.8	47.5	77.1
U.S. <sup>1</sup>	C+	78.4	60.1	43.3	71.8	84.3	46.1	75.7

1. Values in the U.S. row report results for the nation as a whole, if it had been treated as a state.

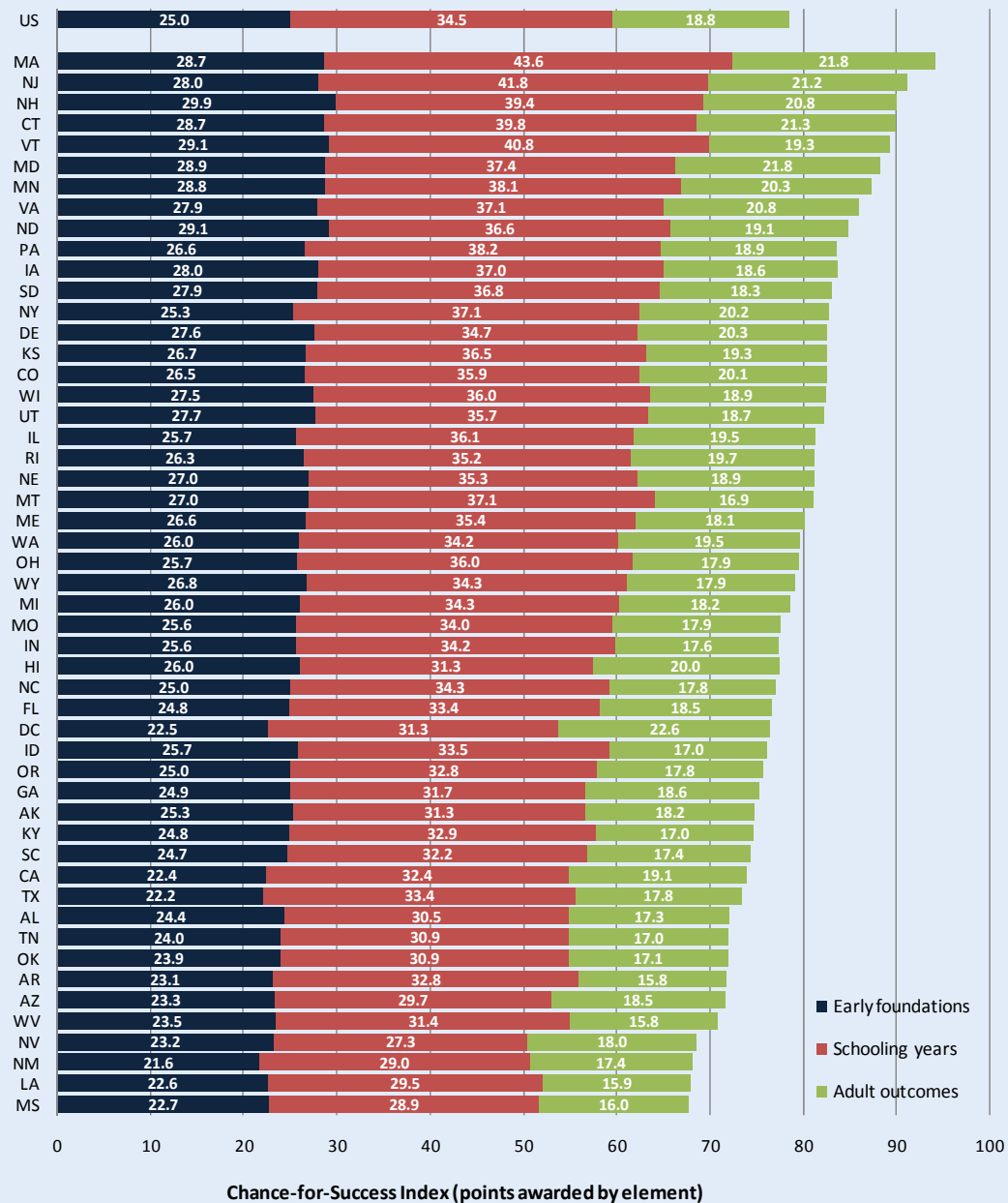


4th Grade Reading	8th Grade Mathematics	High School Graduation	Young Adult Education	Adult Educational Attainment	Annual Income	Steady Employment	
Percent of 4th grade public school students "proficient" on NAEP	Percent of 8th grade public school students "proficient" on NAEP	Percent of public high school students who graduate with a diploma	Percent of young adults (18-24) enrolled in postsecondary education or with a degree	Percent of adults (25-64) with a 2- or 4-year postsecondary degree	Percent of adults (25-64) with incomes at or above national median	Percent of adults (25-64) in labor force working full time and year-round	
49.2	50.7	73.2	65.1	48.9	60.6	67.5	Massachusetts
43.1	40.4	82.5	60.2	43.5	61.2	69.1	New Jersey
41.1	37.9	76.0	62.4	43.7	57.0	69.8	New Hampshire
41.2	34.7	79.8	61.4	44.5	61.6	68.0	Connecticut
40.9	41.4	81.0	59.2	44.8	45.7	67.7	Vermont
35.9	36.5	74.7	53.4	44.8	62.6	71.6	Maryland
36.9	43.1	78.7	59.6	43.9	55.0	67.2	Minnesota
37.6	37.5	73.1	53.2	42.6	56.1	72.5	Virginia
35.3	41.0	79.4	61.5	43.4	43.2	69.9	North Dakota
40.2	38.3	78.2	58.8	37.0	50.2	69.3	Pennsylvania
36.1	35.2	81.1	59.8	37.7	45.9	70.4	Iowa
33.7	39.1	78.5	51.5	38.5	41.1	71.8	South Dakota
36.0	30.2	65.0	62.5	42.7	54.1	68.6	New York
33.8	31.3	62.0	57.7	38.8	56.9	71.9	Delaware
36.1	40.2	74.4	53.8	39.3	48.3	71.6	Kansas
36.2	37.4	74.6	49.9	44.2	53.7	66.5	Colorado
35.6	37.0	77.3	54.4	38.1	49.8	67.7	Wisconsin
33.9	32.4	83.8	53.5	39.6	48.0	66.5	Utah
32.2	30.8	75.7	56.5	39.7	53.1	68.0	Illinois
30.8	27.7	70.6	64.2	39.9	54.5	67.3	Rhode Island
34.6	34.6	79.8	56.3	39.7	44.6	71.7	Nebraska
38.5	37.6	76.2	49.1	37.9	37.1	63.8	Montana
35.8	34.1	76.2	50.8	36.9	44.8	67.7	Maine
36.3	35.9	66.5	47.7	42.0	54.1	63.4	Washington
36.3	35.4	74.7	54.5	33.2	48.1	67.2	Ohio
36.4	36.0	75.8	47.7	33.9	47.3	67.2	Wyoming
32.4	28.9	69.1	55.7	35.6	50.8	64.1	Michigan
31.8	29.9	75.0	49.0	33.5	45.7	69.3	Missouri
33.0	35.1	70.9	51.5	31.8	46.8	68.1	Indiana
25.7	21.2	64.1	44.7	42.9	51.7	69.9	Hawaii
29.1	34.5	66.1	49.7	35.6	43.8	68.2	North Carolina
34.0	27.4	60.5	46.9	36.6	46.2	70.3	Florida
13.8	8.0	58.2	66.3	52.7	61.1	69.9	District of Columbia
35.1	34.1	77.0	44.0	34.6	41.5	64.4	Idaho
28.3	34.8	71.1	47.0	37.7	46.4	62.0	Oregon
28.3	24.7	56.1	45.6	35.2	48.4	70.4	Georgia
28.7	32.2	65.1	39.7	35.7	56.2	57.1	Alaska
33.5	27.3	70.0	47.4	29.3	44.1	68.4	Kentucky
25.8	31.9	53.8	46.0	32.8	42.2	69.9	South Carolina
22.9	23.9	70.7	50.8	38.2	53.5	65.7	California
29.6	34.7	67.3	43.7	32.7	45.9	69.7	Texas
28.9	18.2	59.0	46.5	30.2	43.7	70.7	Alabama
26.9	23.1	72.2	46.5	30.2	43.0	69.0	Tennessee
26.8	21.3	70.4	45.4	31.1	41.0	70.6	Oklahoma
28.6	24.4	72.2	44.1	26.6	38.1	68.1	Arkansas
24.2	26.3	68.4	42.6	34.9	49.0	69.6	Arizona
27.8	18.5	71.7	52.4	25.4	39.2	68.3	West Virginia
24.4	23.0	54.0	35.2	29.0	50.9	70.9	Nevada
24.0	17.4	60.1	43.3	34.5	43.4	66.1	New Mexico
20.4	19.0	61.4	43.9	26.4	42.9	63.8	Louisiana
18.7	13.6	62.1	47.5	28.0	38.1	68.6	Mississippi
31.7	31.0	69.9	51.8	37.2	50.1	68.2	U.S.



## 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.



# K-12 Achievement

	STATE ACHIEVEMENT INDEX		ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL			
			NAEP Mathematics 2007 Percent Proficient		NAEP Reading 2007 Percent Proficient	
			Grade	Total Score	4th Grade	8th Grade
Massachusetts	B	85.2	57.6	50.7	49.2	43.0
Maryland	B	82.5	40.1	36.5	35.9	33.2
New Jersey	B-	80.6	51.8	40.4	43.1	39.0
Vermont	C+	79.2	49.0	41.4	40.9	42.1
Pennsylvania	C+	77.2	47.0	38.3	40.2	36.4
Virginia	C	76.2	41.9	37.5	37.6	33.7
Florida	C	75.2	40.3	27.4	34.0	28.0
Minnesota	C	74.3	50.6	43.1	36.9	36.6
New Hampshire	C	73.9	51.8	37.9	41.1	37.2
Maine	C	73.6	41.8	34.1	35.8	36.9
North Dakota	C	73.4	45.7	41.0	35.3	32.2
Kansas	C	73.3	51.1	40.2	36.1	35.2
Texas	C	72.6	40.2	34.7	29.6	27.5
Ohio	C-	72.4	45.9	35.4	36.3	35.9
Montana	C-	72.3	44.4	37.6	38.5	38.9
Delaware	C-	72.2	40.0	31.3	33.8	30.5
Idaho	C-	72.1	40.1	34.1	35.1	31.6
New York	C-	71.9	43.3	30.2	36.0	32.2
Colorado	C-	71.5	41.2	37.4	36.2	34.6
Iowa	C-	71.5	43.0	35.2	36.1	35.7
Wisconsin	C-	71.4	46.9	37.0	35.6	33.2
Washington	C-	70.9	43.8	35.9	36.3	34.1
South Dakota	C-	70.5	40.6	39.1	33.7	36.8
Wyoming	C-	70.4	44.3	36.0	36.4	33.2
Indiana	C-	70.0	46.3	35.1	33.0	31.1
Utah	C-	69.9	39.4	32.4	33.9	30.1
Illinois	D+	69.1	36.3	30.8	32.2	29.8
Georgia	D+	68.1	31.6	24.7	28.3	25.6
Tennessee	D+	67.0	28.7	23.1	26.9	25.6
Alaska	D+	66.9	37.9	32.2	28.7	27.1
Nebraska	D+	66.7	37.9	34.6	34.6	35.0
North Carolina	D+	66.7	41.0	34.5	29.1	28.0
Kentucky	D+	66.5	30.8	27.3	33.5	27.7
Arkansas	D	66.3	36.7	24.4	28.6	25.4
Connecticut	D	66.2	44.7	34.7	41.2	37.1
Oklahoma	D	66.0	32.6	21.3	26.8	26.1
Hawaii	D	65.1	33.3	21.2	25.7	20.3
California	D	64.7	29.7	23.9	22.9	21.5
Missouri	D	64.7	38.4	29.9	31.8	31.0
Oregon	D	64.5	35.0	34.8	28.3	34.0
South Carolina	D	64.5	35.9	31.9	25.8	24.6
Rhode Island	D	63.8	34.0	27.7	30.8	27.2
Michigan	D	63.5	37.1	28.9	32.4	28.2
Arizona	D	62.6	30.6	26.3	24.2	24.3
Nevada	D-	62.2	30.1	23.0	24.4	21.5
New Mexico	D-	60.3	24.5	17.4	24.0	17.3
Louisiana	D-	60.3	24.4	19.0	20.4	19.4
Alabama	F	59.1	25.8	18.2	28.9	21.2
West Virginia	F	58.1	32.6	18.5	27.8	22.9
District of Columbia	F	57.7	13.5	8.0	13.8	12.1
Mississippi	F	55.9	21.3	13.6	18.7	17.4
U.S. <sup>1</sup>	D+	69.4	38.6	31.0	31.7	29.2

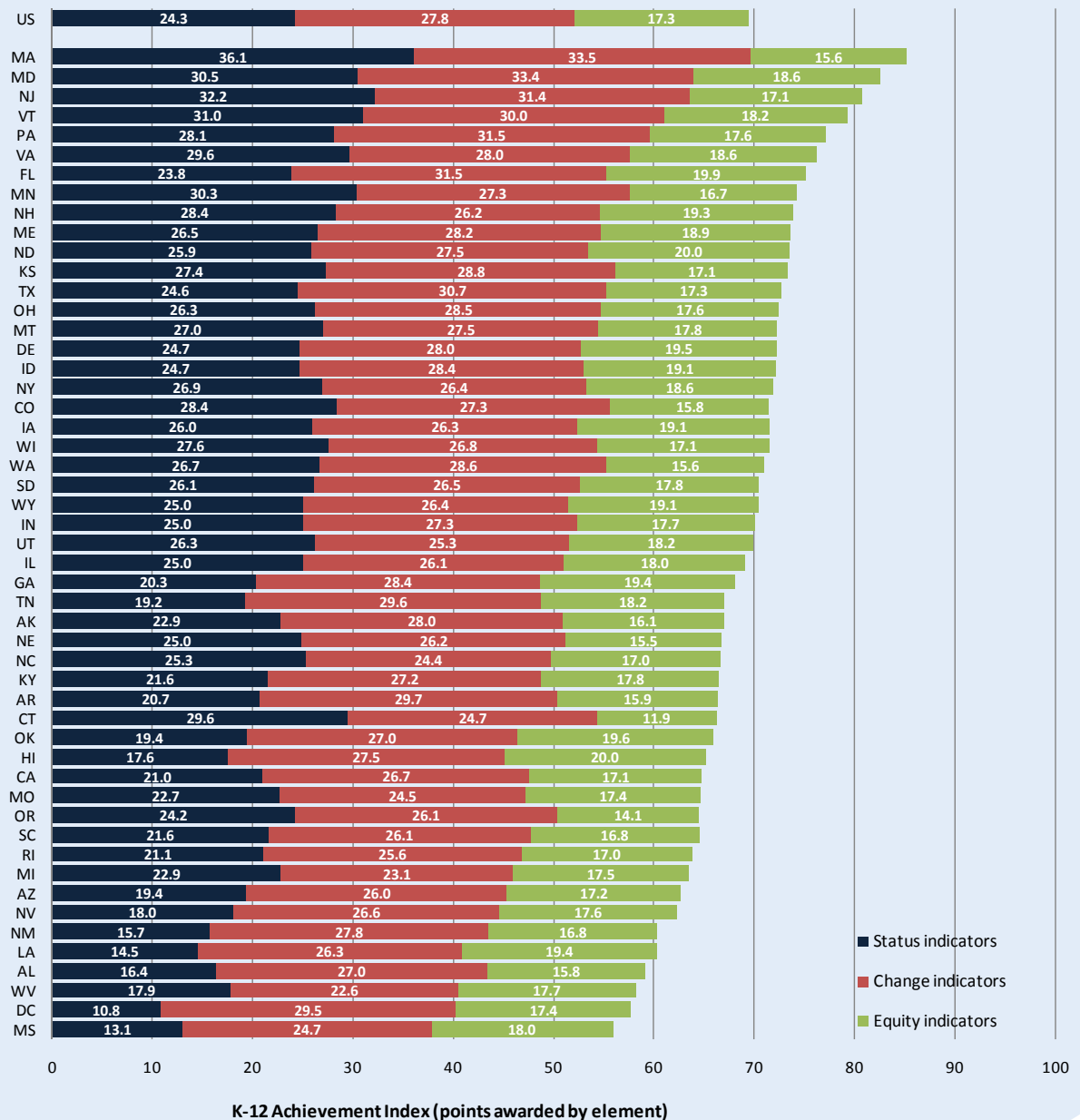
1. Values in the U.S. row report results for the nation as a whole, if it had been treated as a state.

ACHIEVEMENT GAINS				POVERTY GAP				
NAEP Math Scale Score Change 2003 to 2007		NAEP Reading Scale Score Change 2003 to 2007		National School Lunch Program non-eligible vs. eligible 2007		Poverty-Gap Change 2003 to 2007 (negative value = narrowing gap)		
4th Grade	8th Grade	4th Grade	8th Grade	Reading 4th Grade NAEP Scale Score	Math 8th Grade NAEP Scale Score	Reading 4th Grade NAEP Scale Score	Math 8th Grade NAEP Scale Score	
+10.8	+11.4	+8.1	+0.4	29.1	31.4	+2.6	-2.3	Massachusetts
+7.2	+8.0	+6.1	+3.6	27.0	25.2	-4.5	-4.9	Maryland
+9.8	+7.2	+5.6	+2.4	27.3	31.3	-3.2	-3.2	New Jersey
+4.4	+5.4	+2.1	+2.5	22.8	18.8	+5.2	-4.3	Vermont
+8.1	+7.6	+7.7	+3.4	30.3	26.4	-2.7	-4.5	Pennsylvania
+4.3	+5.9	+3.8	-1.1	20.2	26.8	-6.9	-0.6	Virginia
+8.3	+6.0	+5.5	+2.5	21.2	22.7	-5.1	-5.6	Florida
+5.1	+1.2	+2.3	+0.5	26.9	25.6	-0.4	-0.1	Minnesota
+5.5	+1.4	+1.2	-1.0	20.8	20.3	-5.6	-1.2	New Hampshire
+4.8	+4.6	+1.7	+1.6	19.2	17.2	+2.2	-2.3	Maine
+7.8	+4.4	+4.7	-1.7	15.9	15.4	-0.9	-2.0	North Dakota
+6.2	+5.8	+4.5	+1.4	21.5	23.4	-1.9	+2.9	Kansas
+5.0	+8.8	+4.8	+2.0	23.7	22.5	+2.2	-1.3	Texas
+6.8	+3.2	+3.8	+1.4	22.4	24.8	-1.6	-0.5	Ohio
+7.9	+1.1	+3.9	+1.1	18.7	23.0	-5.1	+4.3	Montana
+5.9	+5.8	+1.1	0	18.5	20.2	-1.2	-3.7	Delaware
+6.0	+3.6	+5.1	+0.4	19.4	17.5	+0.6	-2.4	Idaho
+6.6	+0.4	+1.6	-1.8	28.2	24.2	-1.9	-6.8	New York
+5.0	+2.8	+0.1	-1.2	28.1	28.4	+3.5	-1.6	Colorado
+4.3	+1.3	+1.6	-0.1	18.6	21.8	-3.0	-2.0	Iowa
+7.4	+1.7	+2.5	-2.3	26.4	27.5	+4.3	-5.8	Wisconsin
+4.2	+3.7	+2.9	+0.5	24.2	25.9	+2.5	+3.3	Washington
+3.9	+3.6	+1.1	-0.4	22.0	19.1	+1.8	-0.3	South Dakota
+2.8	+3.5	+3.2	-0.8	17.8	16.1	+1.2	-1.1	Wyoming
+7.2	+3.8	+1.3	-0.7	22.1	22.2	-1.2	+0.5	Indiana
+4.6	+0.4	+2.0	-2.1	20.5	19.5	+0.4	-0.4	Utah
+4.4	+3.3	+3.1	-3.6	28.0	29.9	-6.9	-4.1	Illinois
+5.0	+5.1	+5.3	+1.0	23.6	24.9	-3.7	-6.9	Georgia
+5.0	+5.8	+3.8	+1.1	26.7	22.2	+2.4	-6.4	Tennessee
+4.3	+3.5	+2.9	+2.4	30.0	26.5	-2.1	+1.3	Alaska
+1.8	+1.5	+2.3	+0.7	24.4	27.6	+2.5	+2.6	Nebraska
-0.4	+2.6	-3.3	-2.6	24.5	28.1	-2.7	+0.1	North Carolina
+6.4	+4.4	+3.4	-4.2	22.0	21.1	+2.2	-1.4	Kentucky
+8.7	+8.1	+3.4	0	26.3	22.3	+3.7	+2.2	Arkansas
+2.1	-1.3	-1.1	-0.2	37.8	36.1	+5.0	+4.2	Connecticut
+7.7	+2.6	+3.4	-2.2	18.2	20.5	-5.2	-1.3	Oklahoma
+7.5	+3.0	+5.2	0	17.8	18.2	-3.7	-2.8	Hawaii
+2.6	+3.3	+2.9	+0.3	30.3	26.2	-0.6	-3.6	California
+4.6	+1.9	-1.5	-3.9	21.5	24.5	-2.6	+1.6	Missouri
-0.3	+2.9	-2.6	+1.7	27.8	23.7	+9.4	+4.0	Oregon
+1.3	+4.2	-1.0	-0.7	26.6	25.0	+0.7	-0.9	South Carolina
+5.6	+3.4	+2.3	-2.6	27.1	28.1	-1.4	-2.4	Rhode Island
+1.9	+0.4	+1.3	-4.1	25.6	26.0	-3.0	-1.5	Michigan
+3.0	+4.4	+0.6	-0.5	28.7	23.8	-2.8	-0.7	Arizona
+4.3	+2.8	+3.9	0	25.4	19.9	0	-0.2	Nevada
+5.5	+4.3	+8.4	-0.8	25.3	24.0	-1.0	+1.4	New Mexico
+3.8	+6.1	+2.7	-0.2	25.3	19.5	-4.0	-4.6	Louisiana
+5.2	+4.1	+9.3	-1.2	29.2	30.4	-2.4	+1.1	Alabama
+5.6	-0.7	-4.0	-4.6	18.9	19.2	+3.4	+0.7	West Virginia
+8.8	+5.1	+8.7	+2.1	28.2	16.2	+4.6	-2.2	District of Columbia
+4.7	+4.0	+2.3	-4.9	24.5	23.5	-4.4	-0.7	Mississippi
+5.1	+4.1	+3.2	-0.3	26.8	26.0	-1.1	-2.4	U.S.

	ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE		HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION		ADVANCED PLACEMENT	
	NAEP Math 2007 Percent Advanced	NAEP Math Percent Advanced Change 2003 to 2007	Graduation Rates (All students, public schools)		High test scores (3 or Above) Per 100 Students in Grades 11 and 12 (Public Schools)	
	8th grade	8th grade	2004	Change 2000 to 2004	2006	Change 2000 to 2006
Massachusetts	14.9	+6.5	73.2	-1.9	21.5	+6.5
Maryland	10.1	+3.3	74.7	+2.0	34.5	+17.7
New Jersey	10.5	+4.1	82.5	+0.3	21.3	+4.4
Vermont	10.3	+3.5	81.0	+7.6	15.2	+5.9
Pennsylvania	7.9	+2.8	78.2	+2.9	12.1	+3.5
Virginia	8.9	+3.1	73.1	-4.2	29.0	+9.5
Florida	5.4	+1.2	60.5	+10.6	21.5	+7.2
Minnesota	11.5	+2.7	78.7	0	14.1	+6.4
New Hampshire	7.8	+1.3	76.0	+2.6	11.7	+4.3
Maine	7.1	+2.1	76.2	+4.4	13.5	+4.3
North Dakota	6.8	+2.0	79.4	-0.6	6.6	+2.8
Kansas	8.5	+2.1	74.4	+0.9	8.0	+3.8
Texas	6.9	+2.8	67.3	+4.4	18.3	+7.0
Ohio	6.5	+1.5	74.7	+3.9	11.5	+4.4
Montana	7.2	+1.5	76.2	-0.4	9.4	+3.2
Delaware	6.6	+2.2	62.0	-5.0	19.1	+11.3
Idaho	6.2	+1.8	77.0	+2.4	10.2	+4.9
New York	6.6	+0.8	65.0	+4.5	27.1	+6.1
Colorado	9.5	+2.0	74.6	+4.4	20.1	+8.4
Iowa	7.1	+1.6	81.1	+2.8	8.3	+3.5
Wisconsin	8.0	+1.6	77.3	+0.6	16.2	+6.4
Washington	9.1	+3.1	66.5	+4.3	13.8	+7.0
South Dakota	6.9	+2.1	78.5	+0.3	10.0	+4.4
Wyoming	6.5	+2.1	75.8	+1.0	5.9	+2.9
Indiana	7.5	+2.2	70.9	+0.2	9.2	+4.1
Utah	6.1	+0.4	83.8	+4.5	21.0	+3.5
Illinois	7.0	+1.1	75.7	+2.0	18.7	+6.3
Georgia	4.1	+0.1	56.1	+2.7	17.0	+7.8
Tennessee	3.8	+0.8	72.2	+14.7	8.7	+2.9
Alaska	7.1	+1.4	65.1	+5.9	12.3	+2.1
Nebraska	7.6	+2.5	79.8	+1.4	5.9	+3.2
North Carolina	8.0	+0.9	66.1	+5.8	20.6	+7.8
Kentucky	5.0	+1.3	70.0	+6.3	10.8	+5.6
Arkansas	3.7	+1.5	72.2	+2.7	11.1	+6.6
Connecticut	8.4	+0.1	79.8	+3.5	22.5	+7.5
Oklahoma	3.1	+1.1	70.4	+2.8	10.5	+4.4
Hawaii	3.0	+0.7	64.1	+1.8	7.0	+2.0
California	4.9	+0.5	70.7	+2.1	22.6	+6.7
Missouri	5.3	+1.2	75.0	+3.7	7.1	+3.5
Oregon	8.5	+1.9	71.1	+8.0	9.5	+4.0
South Carolina	7.4	+2.6	53.8	+5.4	13.7	+2.6
Rhode Island	4.9	+1.8	70.6	-2.0	8.1	+2.3
Michigan	6.0	+1.3	69.1	-3.8	12.3	+3.4
Arizona	4.8	+2.1	68.4	+1.2	8.2	+1.9
Nevada	3.6	+0.8	54.0	-1.3	13.3	+6.0
New Mexico	2.6	+0.9	60.1	-0.6	9.6	+4.3
Louisiana	2.2	+0.4	61.4	+1.9	2.4	+0.7
Alabama	2.5	+0.6	59.0	-2.3	6.4	+2.4
West Virginia	2.2	+0.4	71.7	+1.4	6.3	+1.9
District of Columbia	1.1	-0.1	58.2	+4.7	7.7	+0.4
Mississippi	1.6	+0.5	62.1	+3.0	2.9	+0.9
U.S.	6.6	+1.6	69.9	+3.1	16.9	+6.0

# 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.



# edweek.org

## OPEN HOUSE

### January 15-30, 2008

### *Please join us!*

Go to [edweek.org](http://edweek.org) and enjoy **unlimited use** of the most powerful and informative site for K-12 educators for **two weeks!** You will see why hundreds of thousands of your colleagues visit us each month. During the open house, you may:

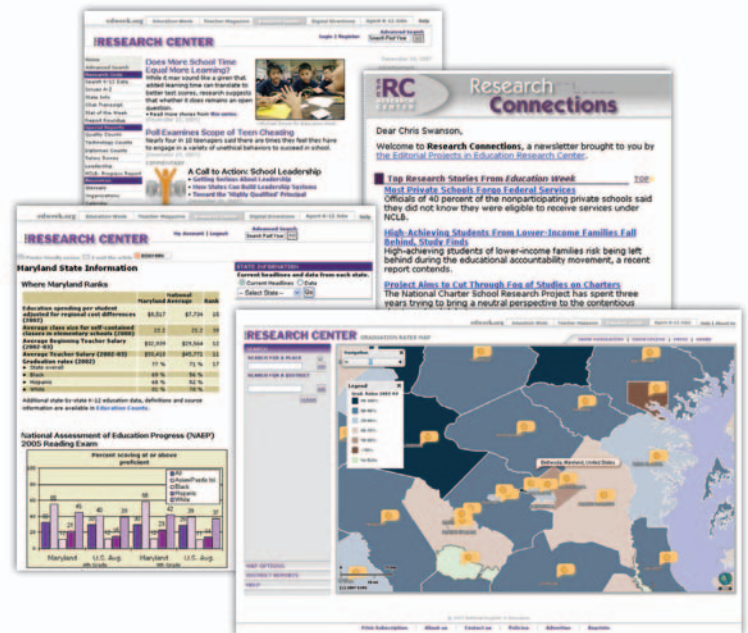
- View all *Quality Counts 2008* articles and statistics.
- View all articles in *Education Week* and *Teacher Magazine*.
- Send articles of interest to friends and colleagues.
- Search 25 years of *Education Week* archives.
- Conduct your own analysis using the hundreds of indicators found in the Education Counts database.
- And much more!

While you are there, register to receive the **FREE** e-newsletters of specific interest to you. Your access doesn't have to end when the open house does - your **FREE** registration **always** allows you limited access to all areas of [edweek.org](http://edweek.org).

Go now to [edweek.org](http://edweek.org) and return often. See you there!

Visit the **EPE RESEARCH CENTER** online  
[www.edweek.org/rc](http://www.edweek.org/rc)

- ▶ **Education Counts** - More than 1,000 state-level K-12 education indicators from **QUALITY COUNTS**, **DIPLOMAS COUNT**, **TECHNOLOGY COUNTS**, and other sources, some of which have been tracked for a decade
- ▶ **State Info** - Key statistics from across the states on achievement, funding, class size, and more
- ▶ **EdWeek Maps** - A powerful online mapping tool that enables users to zoom in on each of the nation's schools and districts, click a button, and produce a standardized report that compares district, state, and national figures
- ▶ **Special Reports** - Research and analysis from the EPE Research Center on the No Child Left Behind Act, school leadership, and school salaries, plus the annual **QUALITY COUNTS**, **DIPLOMAS COUNT** and **TECHNOLOGY COUNTS** reports
- ▶ **Chats** - Transcripts of live Web chats, featuring leaders in education discussing key policy issues with our online audience
- ▶ **Research Connections** - The EPE Research Center's monthly newsletter for updates on education policy and analysis



Access the Education Counts database to build custom tables, charts, and maps using **QUALITY COUNTS 2008** data.

# Jay Mathews

Education Reporter and Columnist  
*The Washington Post*

Jay Mathews is an education reporter and columnist. He has been with *The Washington Post* for 36 years. He was born April 5, 1945, in Long Beach, Calif., and attended Hillsdale High School in San Mateo, Calif., and Occidental and Harvard Colleges and served with the U.S. Army in Vietnam. Mr. Mathews has reported from China and California, and covered the stock market in New York. He has written books about China, about disability rights, about the famous Los Angeles math teacher Jaime Escalante, and about the lack of challenge in most American high schools.

Mr. Mathews' rating system for U.S. high schools, the Challenge Index, has been cited in hundreds of newspapers and appears regularly in *Newsweek*, the latest issue coming out last May. His book on college admissions, *Harvard Schmarvard: Getting Beyond the Ivy League to the College that is Best for You*, is published by Three Rivers Press. It shows why getting into a brand-name school will NOT change your life, and instructs applicants in how to survive the admissions process with their family and their sense of humor intact. His new book, *Supertest: How the International Baccalaureate Can Strengthen Our Schools*, with co-author Ian Hill, describes the IB program's success in transforming ordinary schools, particularly Mount Vernon High in Fairfax County, Va. His book on the two dynamic young teachers who created the KIPP schools, which he describes as the best in the country for raising the achievement of low-income children, will be published in 2008.

Mathews' column, "Class Struggle", appears each Tuesday on *The Washington Post's* website, [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), and regularly in *The Washington Post Magazine*. His "Extra Credit" column appears Thursdays in the *Post*. He won the Education Writers Association National Education Reporting Award for a series on retraining auto workers and the Benjamin Fine Award for Outstanding Education Reporting for both a feature story and a column on standardized testing. In 2005 he received the Eugene Meyer Award, *The Washington Post's* top honor for distinguished service to the newspaper.

In September 2007, *Washingtonian* magazine declared him one of the region's 150 most powerful people, for which he has been cruelly teased by family and friends.

*Jay Mathews is a member of the Board of Trustees of Editorial Projects in Education, the non-profit corporation that publishes Education Week.*



# Virginia B. Edwards

EDITORIAL PROJECTS IN EDUCATION

EDUCATION WEEK

President, Editorial Projects in Education  
Editor and Publisher, *Education Week* and edweek.org

As president of Editorial Projects in Education, Virginia B. Edwards oversees the nearly 90-person nonprofit corporation that publishes *Education Week* and edweek.org. She has held the post since 1997.

Ms. Edwards has been the editor of *Education Week* – the “newspaper of record” for precollegiate education in the United States – since 1989. The newspaper, which covers policy developments in K-12 education and is published 45 times a year, has a paid circulation of about 50,000 and is read by more than 160,000 others. The newspaper also publishes three highly anticipated reports each year: *Quality Counts*, *Technology Counts*, and *Diplomas Count*.

For the past 12 years, Ms. Edwards has also served as the editor and publisher of edweek.org. Currently, edweek.org serves up nearly 2 million page views to more than 300,000 unique visitors each month. In addition, 250,000-plus people now subscribe to the site’s weekly newsletter, *EW Update*, and hundreds of thousands have subscribed to a growing array of themed monthly newsletters. Among its other offerings, the site routinely hosts live Web chats with key education players and houses the most comprehensive K-12 Research Center and education news Archives to be found anywhere on the Web.

Before joining EPE, Ms. Edwards worked for two years for the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and, for the nearly 10 years before that, was an editor and reporter for *The Courier-Journal* in Louisville, Ky.

A frequent speaker on education policy issues, Ms. Edwards serves on the boards of several nonprofit organizations, including the Center on Education Policy, the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, the Student Press Law Center, and Learning Matters.

# Lynn Olson

# EDUCATION WEEK

Managing Editor for Special Projects, *Education Week*  
Executive Project Editor, *Quality Counts* and *Diplomas Count*

Lynn Olson has written about public education in the United States for nearly 25 years. A nationally recognized education journalist, she has won awards from the Education Writers Association, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the International Reading Association. In 2005, she won an award from the Consortium for Policy Research in Education for her outstanding contributions to education policy.

She is the managing editor for special projects at *Education Week*, an independent, national newspaper that covers education in grades K-12, and the executive project editor for *Quality Counts*, an annual report card on public education in the 50 states, published by *Education Week* with support from the Pew Charitable Trusts, and for *Diplomas Count: An Essential Guide to Graduation Policy and Rates*, produced with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

In 1995, she received a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation of New York to write a book about the transition from school to work for America's young people. The book, *The School to Work Revolution: How Employers and Educators Are Joining Forces To Prepare Tomorrow's Skilled Workforce*, was published by Addison-Wesley in 1997.

Ms. Olson is a member of the board of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. A graduate of Yale University, she lives in Maryland with her husband, Steve, and her two children.

# Christopher B. Swanson

Director, EPE Research Center  
Editorial Projects in Education



Christopher B. Swanson, Ph.D., is the Director of the EPE Research Center, a division of Editorial Projects in Education, the nonprofit organization that publishes *Education Week*. In this capacity, he oversees a staff of full-time researchers and interns who conduct annual policy surveys, collect data, and perform analyses that appear in the *Quality Counts*, *Technology Counts*, and *Diplomas Count* annual reports of *Education Week*. The Center also contributes data and analysis to special coverage in *Education Week*, *Teacher Magazine*, and [edweek.org](http://edweek.org), publishes the monthly *Research Connections Newsletter*, hosts live Web chats on research topics, and maintains the Education Counts and EdWeek Maps online data resources.

Among the EPE Research Center's major projects is *Quality Counts*, an annual special issue of *Education Week* supported throughout its 12-year history by the Pew Charitable Trusts and the Pew Center on the States. In 2006, the EPE Research Center and *Education Week* launched a four-year project to examine graduation rates and related issues facing the nation's high schools. The project's major releases include the annual *Diplomas Count* report and EdWeek Maps, a powerful GIS-based online data tool that allows users to map out information on graduation rates and generate customized reports for any school district in the nation.

Prior to joining EPE in 2005, Swanson was a Senior Research Associate at the Urban Institute, where his work focused on issues of federal policy and urban high school reform involving small-school restructuring. During the past few years, much of Swanson's research has examined the implementation of accountability provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act. In particular he has extensively investigated the persistent challenges associated with accurately measuring high school graduation rates, a required element of the performance-based accountability mandated under the federal law. Swanson's body of research on this topic has been widely profiled in the national and regional media and has provided policy leaders important insights into this critical issue.

Swanson's work on a variety of educational policy issues—among them standards and accountability, instructional reform, high school dropout and completion, student mobility, and public school choice—has been presented at national conferences and published in leading scholarly journals and edited volumes. He is a frequent speaker and commentator on these and other topics and has advised the Alliance for Excellent Education, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the Government Accountability Office, the National Governors Association, the U.S. Department of Education, and other organizations and foundations.