

# THE WIDGET EFFECT

Our National Failure to Acknowledge and Act on Differences in Teacher Effectiveness



For more information and related resources, visit [widgeteffect.org](http://widgeteffect.org)

## Statements of Support

### **Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education**

“Effective teachers who are fairly compensated are vital ingredients in the reforms our schools need. Schools need to have evaluation systems that fairly and accurately identify effective teachers.”

### **Randi Weingarten, President, American Federation of Teachers**

“This report offers further evidence that our current teacher evaluation system, by and large, doesn't work. The report also points the way to a credible, fair, accurate and effective teacher evaluation system that would improve teaching and learning.”

### **Dennis Van Roekel, President, National Education Association**

“It is time that we made the social, political and financial commitments to develop comprehensive assessment, evaluation and professional development systems. These systems should be designed to improve the knowledge, skills and effectiveness of the teacher workforce and work to ensure that every student gets the necessary resources, which include well-trained, high-quality teachers in every classroom.”

### **Phil Bredesen, Governor of Tennessee**

“Improving instructional quality is the cornerstone of successful school reform. This report clearly shows that states must revisit their evaluation of educators - just as we have revisited assessments for students - to ensure great results. Every teacher deserves to have an evaluation process that will strengthen their skills in the classroom.”

### **U.S. Rep. George Miller (D-CA), Chair, House Education and Labor Committee**

“If we expect every child to receive a world-class education, we must provide teachers with the fair compensation and opportunities they deserve. This includes a thorough and meaningful evaluation process. Education is key to a lasting economic recovery; building a professional, well-rewarded and appreciated teaching workforce is in the best interest of both our students and our economic future.”

### **Bill Ritter, Governor of Colorado**

“Nothing helps students reach their God-given potential like great teaching. This report underscores the challenge all states face to ensure that teacher evaluations are meaningful, fair, constructive, and help develop exceptional classroom teachers. The report findings connect well with Colorado's aggressive education reforms and current Race to the Top effort, which together intend to place great teachers in all classrooms.”

### **Joel Klein, Chancellor, New York City Department of Education**

“*The Widget Effect* offers a compelling explanation for why so many schools struggle to succeed. Good schools and school systems are built on good teachers. If we cannot distinguish what makes teachers effective, we won't be able to focus on keeping our best teachers, identifying ineffective teaching, and offering support that helps teachers do their best work. We cannot expect improvement if we deny that anyone has room to improve.”

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## **Dwight Jones, Colorado Commissioner of Education**

"Colorado appreciates the focus that this report places upon our most critical resource – effective teachers – and will include the analysis in the information it considers as we identify opportunities to support local school districts in their efforts to provide an effective teacher for every student. The report's recommendations provide several opportunities that Colorado may pursue in its Race to the Top effort this summer and fall, as well as for the General Assembly to consider during the 2010 legislative session."

## **Beverly Ingle, President, Colorado Education Association**

"We agree with much of the information presented in The New Teacher Project report. TNTP validates what CEA and its members have maintained for years – that evaluation should focus on improving instructional effectiveness, that professional development based on evaluation will help teachers do a more effective job, and that poorly performing teachers should be given a genuine opportunity to improve before a district moves for dismissal."

## **Shayne Spalten, Chief Human Resources Officer, Denver Public Schools**

"If we are to succeed in creating systems that serve all children, we must put improved student learning at the center of our discussions. And together, we must take responsibility for establishing effective ways of identifying, rewarding and retaining our highest performing educators, offering meaningful opportunities for teachers to improve their practice and, where necessary, fair and efficient systems for removing teachers who, despite this support, fail to help students grow."

## **Rich Nagel, Executive Director, Arkansas Education Association**

"I agree with TNTP's conclusion that all stakeholders must come together to create credible and meaningful ways of differentiating the performance of teachers. Teacher evaluation is a collaborative process that should lead to systemic change and improvement. Effective evaluation systems support the induction of beginning teachers, promote the professional growth of career educators, improve performance when it falls short of expectations and provide standards for making responsible employment decisions."

## **Allan Odden, Co-Director, Strategic Management of Human Capital (SMHC)**

"The New Teacher Project report highlights the importance of teacher evaluations and their role in boosting student achievement. Teacher evaluations are rarely used to their full potential. When used properly, they can identify excellence and isolate situations where improvement is necessary. But unfortunately, too many of them are low quality and lack real consequences. SMHC... is urging all states and districts in the SMHC Networks to develop performance-based teacher evaluation systems, using stimulus funding as the one time expenditure for this developmental effort."

