North Carolina

State Highlights 2012

The Global Challenge

Education in a Competitive World

A Special Supplement to *Education Week*'s

QUALITY COUNTS 2012

EPE RC RESEARCH CENTER

North Carolina—State Highlights 2012
A special supplement to *Education Week*'s *Quality Counts 2012*
The Global Challenge: Education in a Competitive World

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About this Report

The 16th annual edition of *Education Week*'s *Quality Counts* continues the report's tradition of tracking key education indicators and grading the states on their policy efforts and outcomes. This year's special theme—American schooling from an international perspective—examines the nation's place among the world's public education systems and provides a fresh look at the political, social, and cultural challenges the United States faces in preparing its students for the workforce demands of an interconnected world economy.

The special theme is complemented by newly updated 50-state information on policies and conditions in five of the areas monitored by the report on an ongoing basis as part of *Quality Counts*' State of the States framework: Chance for Success; K-12 achievement; standards, assessments, and accountability; the teaching profession; and school finance. Most of the indicators that appear in the report are based on original analyses and state-survey data from the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, supplemented by information published by other organizations.

To provide a comprehensive perspective on state policy and performance, the 2012 State Highlights Reports integrate findings from the 2011 and 2012 editions of *Quality Counts*. This approach allows us to capture state standings across the full set of six topical areas that comprise the report's state-grading rubric. The overall state scores and letter grades awarded in *Quality Counts* are based on the following categories: Chance for Success; K-12 achievement; standards, assessments, and accountability; the teaching profession; school finance; and transitions and alignment. This year's state reports also highlight challenges posed by a difficult economic climate, as states continue to make cuts to policies and programs in attempt to balance their budgets.

Overall findings from *Quality Counts* show that some states perform consistently well or poorly across the full range of graded categories. However, a closer examination of the results reveals that most states post a strong showing in at least one area. This suggests that while broad evaluations of state rankings and performance can be useful, a deeper reading of the results presented in this State Highlights Report will provide a more nuanced perspective on the educational condition of the nation and the states.

Editorial Projects in Education Research Center
January 2012

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 publishes *Education Week*, America's newspaper of record for precollegiate education, *Digital Directions*, the *Teacher Professional Development Sourcebook*, and the Top School Jobs 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 maintains the Education Counts and EdWeek Maps online data resources.

QUALITY COUNTS 2012 GRADING SUMMARY

OVERALL GRADE

A state's overall grade is the average of the scores for the six graded categories.

North Carolina: **C+**

Rank: 17

Nation: C

Online extra
Calculate your own *Quality Counts* grades at **www.edweek.org/qc12calculate**

	North Carolina grade	North Carolina rank	How did the average state score?
Chance for success (2012)	C+	30	C+
K-12 achievement (2012)	C-	20	C-
Standards, assessments, and accountability (2012)	A	10	B
The teaching profession (2012)	C+	16	C
School finance analysis (2012)	D	46	C
Transitions and alignment (2011)	B	11	C+

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 based on the respective subcategory scores.

	North Carolina	U.S. Average
Chance for success (2012)		
Early foundations	79.2	79.9
School years	76.2	75.4
Adult outcomes	74.8	78.8
K-12 achievement (2012)		
Status	69.3	64.2
Change	68.3	70.6
Equity	77.2	77.8
Standards, assessments, and accountability (2012)		
Standards	100.0	87.3
Assessments	78.3	83.3
School accountability	100.0	85.3
The teaching profession (2012)		
Accountability for quality	76.5	74.5
Incentives & allocation	76.9	70.4
Building & supporting capacity	80.0	72.6
School finance analysis (2012)		
Equity	85.5	86.1
Spending	47.2	64.9
Transitions and alignment (2011)		
Early-childhood education	90.0	82.0
College readiness	70.0	65.7
Economy & workforce	100.0	89.5

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)

THE GLOBAL CHALLENGE

States Seek International Insight

As educators and policymakers seek to prepare students for a competitive global economy, states have looked to other nations to inform the development or revision of their own academic-content standards. States are more likely to seek international guidance in mathematics and science, subjects often linked to economic competitiveness and technological innovation, than in English/language arts or social studies.

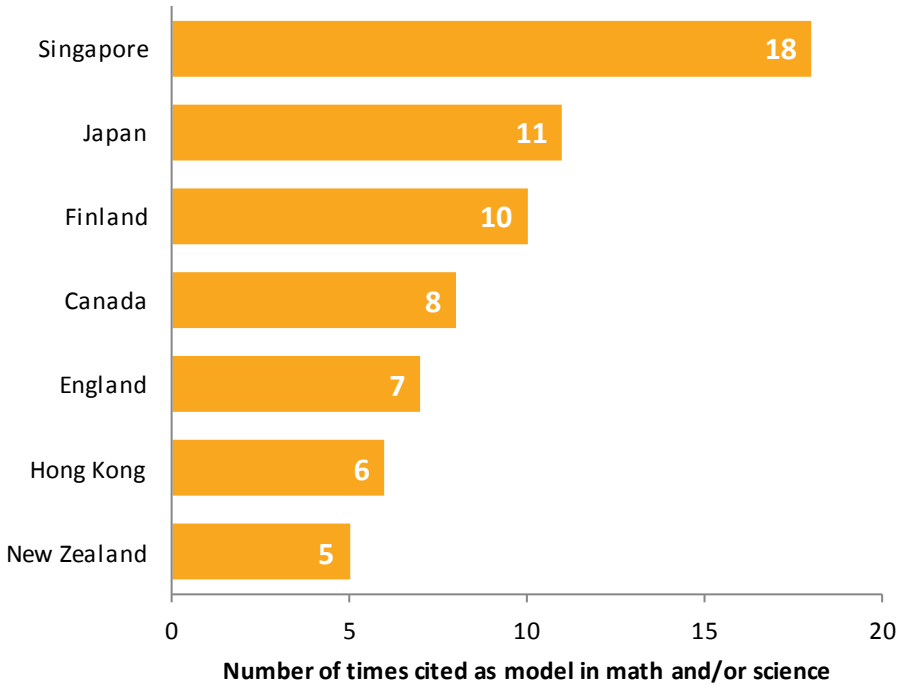
International Standards

The national summary column indicates the number of states using international standards as a model.

From *Quality Counts 2012*	North Carolina	Nation
Standards from other nations used as model		
English/language arts	No	10 states
Mathematics	Yes	23
Science	Yes	13
Social studies/history	No	2

Finding Models For State Standards

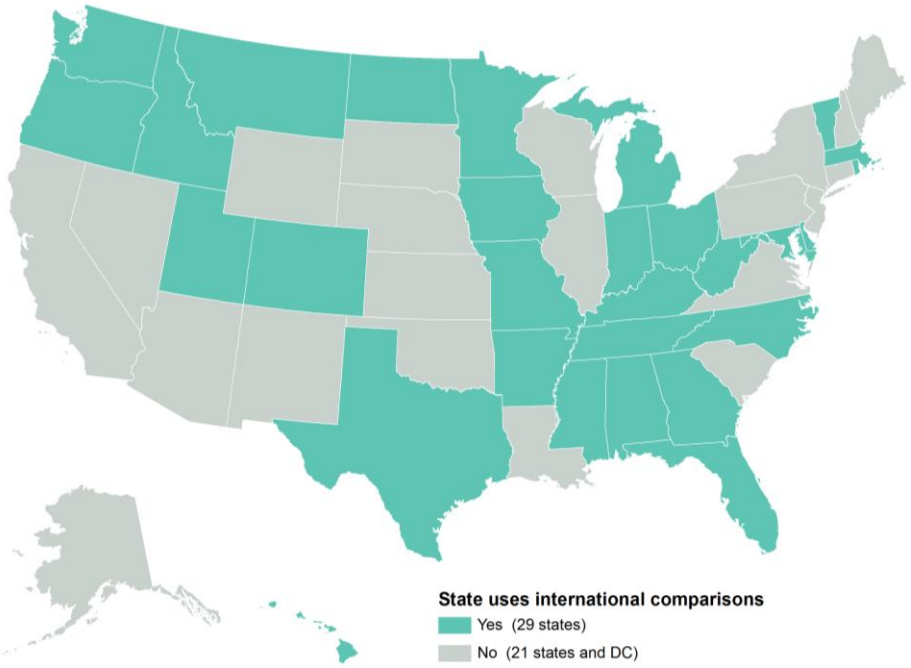
In response to a survey from the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, 23 states indicated that they used standards from other nations to inform their own standards in mathematics and/or science. State education agency staff most frequently cited standards from Singapore as a model for current state standards in those subjects.



SOURCE: EPE Research Center, 2012

Looking Beyond Our Borders

The Editorial Projects in Education Research Center asked state education agency officials whether they look to other countries to inform their own reform efforts. SEA officials in 29 states indicated that their agencies use such international information. In 21 states and the District of Columbia, respondents said the SEA is not currently using education data from other nations as a policy resource.



SOURCE: EPE Research Center, 2012

Putting Global Comparisons to Use

In response to an EPE Research Center survey, many states cited a need to align student preparation with the demands of a global economy and learn from "best practices" in high-achieving nations. In describing their ways of using such insight from abroad, states most frequently noted the role of international indicators in comparing student achievement and developing academic-content standards.

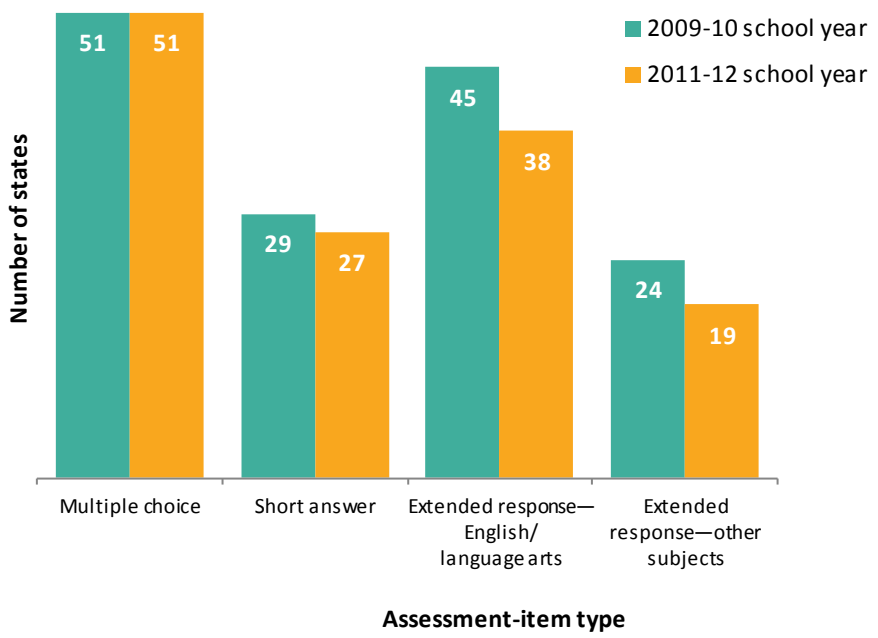
SOURCE: EPE Research Center, 2012

ECONOMIC CONCERNS SPUR STATE POLICY CHANGES

Cutting Back on Ways to Measure Student Performance

The EPE Research Center regularly tracks the types of test items used to measure student performance on state assessments. This year we find a notable drop in the number of states using items that are not multiple choice.

Fewer states include essay questions and other extended-response items on their assessments in 2012 than in 2010. The number of states assessing students' knowledge using short-answer questions also declined during that span. Some states point to budget cuts as a consideration when changing the format of their assessments.

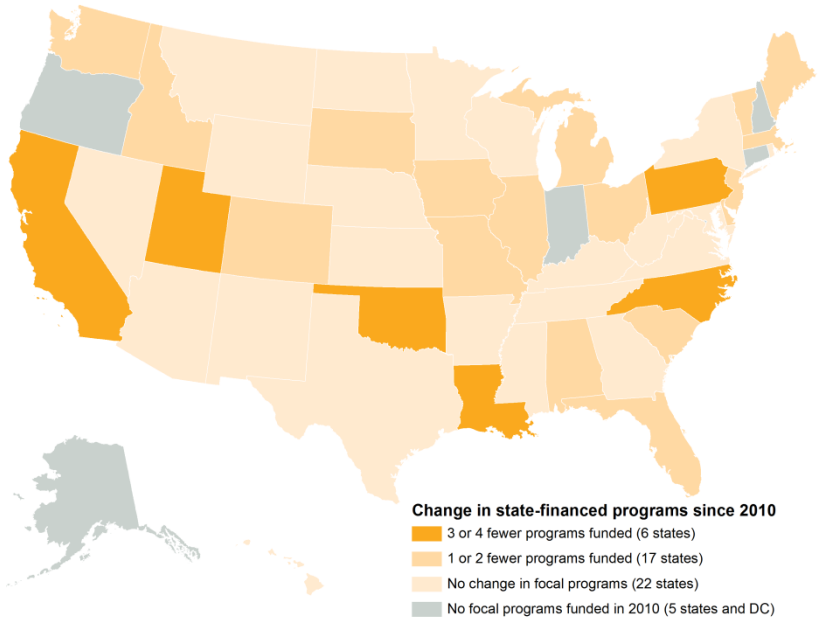


SOURCE: EPE Research Center, 2012

Reducing State-Funded Programs for Educators

The EPE Research Center tracks 10 indicators highlighting state efforts to finance programs intended to develop and allocate teaching talent. State strategies include financing professional development for teachers, encouraging teachers and principals to work in hard-to-staff schools or assignment areas, and rewarding teachers based on their performance.

Almost half the states finance fewer such programs in 2012 than they did in 2010. Many states cite budget cuts, prompted by the faltering economy, as a factor in eliminating program funding.



SOURCE: EPE Research Center, 2012

CHANCE FOR SUCCESS

The Chance-for-Success Index

The EPE Research Center developed the Chance-for-Success Index to better understand the role of education over an individual's lifetime. 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 their 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

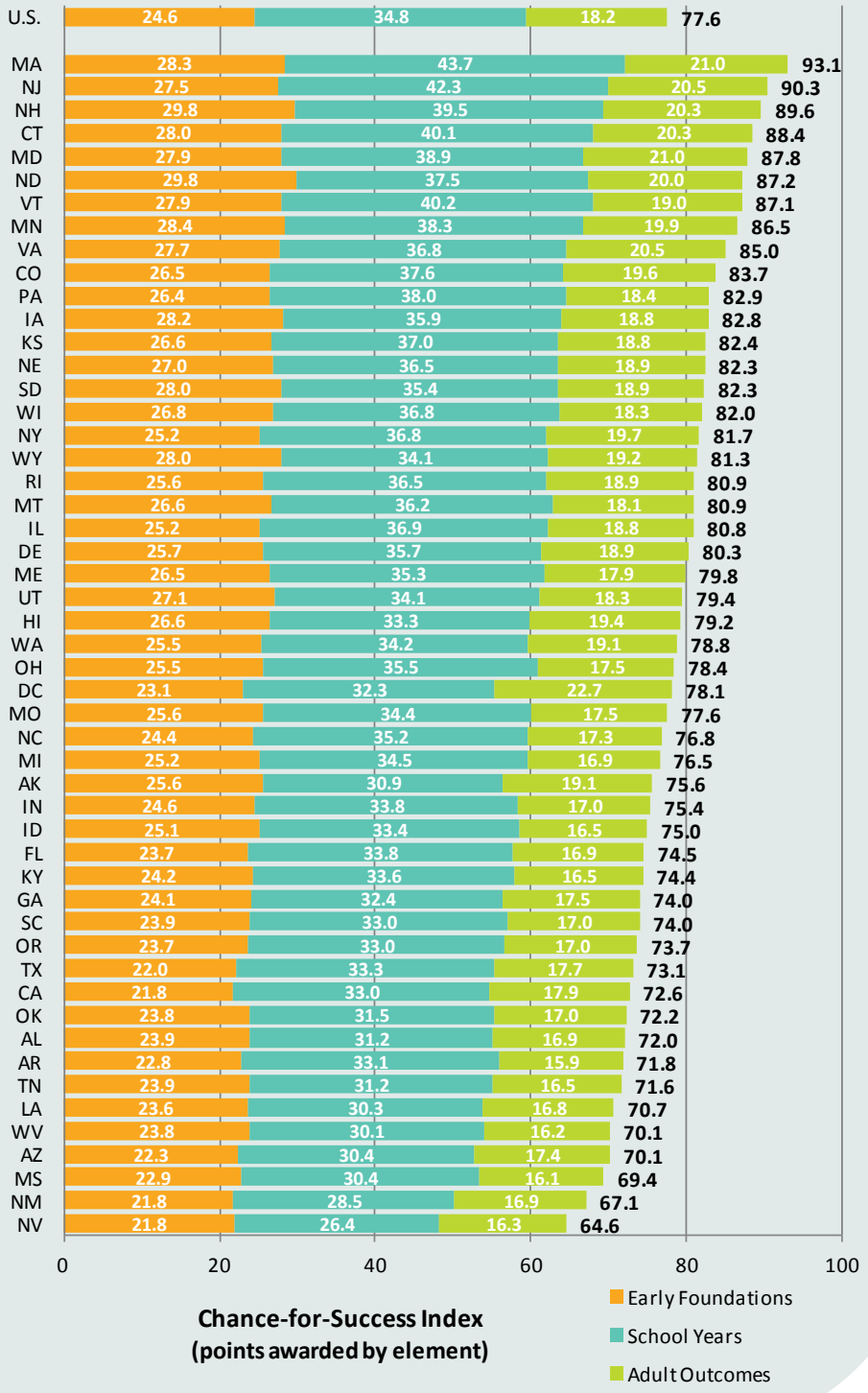
From *Quality Counts 2012*	North Carolina State Average	North Carolina Rank	National Average
Early Foundations			
Family income Children from families with incomes at least 200% of poverty level (2010)	51.3%	39	55.8%
Parent education Children with at least one parent with a postsecondary degree (2010)	44.5	29	44.6
Parental employment Children with at least one parent working full time and year-round (2010)	69.3	36	71.5
Linguistic integration Children whose parents are fluent English-speakers (2010)	89.2	31	83.3
School Years			
Preschool enrollment Three- and 4-year-olds enrolled in preschool (2010)	45.9	28	48.3
Kindergarten enrollment Eligible children enrolled in kindergarten programs (2010)	79.3	10	77.6
Elementary reading Fourth grade public school students proficient on NAEP (2011)	33.7	24	32.4
Middle school mathematics Eighth grade public school students proficient on NAEP (2011)	37.0	21	33.5
High school graduation Public high school students who graduate with a diploma (class of 2008)	72.8	25	71.7
Postsecondary participation Young adults enrolled in postsecondary education or with a degree (2010)	52.3	30	54.9
Adult Outcomes			
Adult educational attainment Adults with a two- or four-year postsecondary degree (2010)	37.6	30	38.4
Annual income Adults with incomes at or above national median (2010)	45.1	43	50.9
Steady employment Adults in labor force working full time and year-round (2010)	66.7	41	68.0
GRADE	**C+**	**30**	**C+**

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 93.1 (Massachusetts, earning the only A) to 64.6 (Nevada, with a D). A closer examination of results shows that, while early foundations and adult outcomes do contribute to the index, indicators related to formal education (the schooling years) are the driving force behind the state rankings.



NOTE: State subscores may not sum to total score due to rounding.

SOURCE: EPE Research Center, 2012

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY PERFORMANCE

The K-12 Achievement Index

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

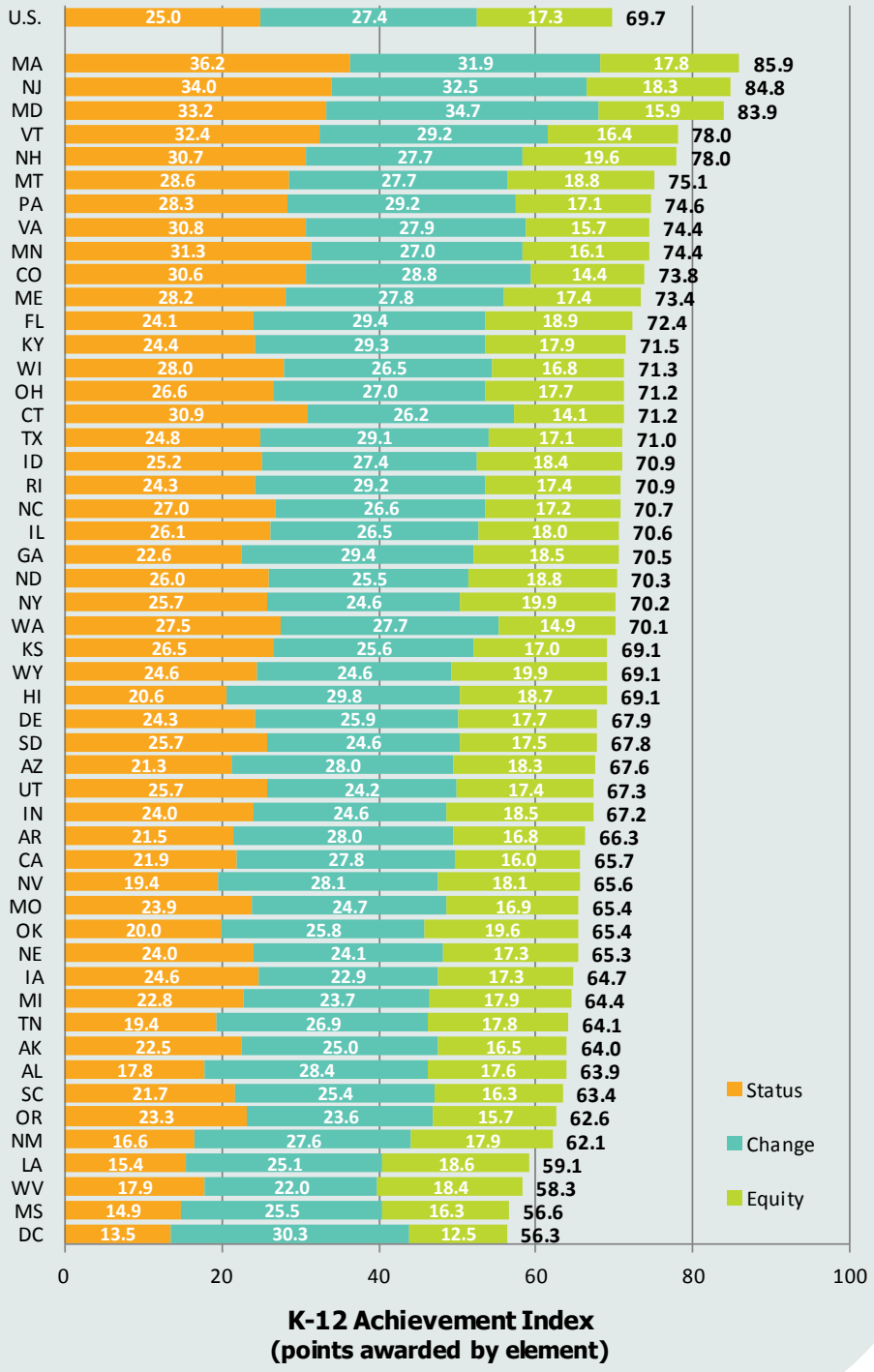
From *Quality Counts 2012*	North Carolina State Average	North Carolina Rank	National Average
Achievement Levels			
4th grade math – Percent proficient on NAEP (2011)	44.3%	18	39.7%
8th grade math – Percent proficient on NAEP (2011)	37.0%	21	33.5%
4th grade reading – Percent proficient on NAEP (2011)	33.7%	24	32.4%
8th grade reading – Percent proficient on NAEP (2011)	31.1%	33	31.6%
Achievement Gains			
4th grade math – Scale-score change on NAEP (2003-2011)	+2.5	46	+6.2
8th grade math – Scale-score change on NAEP (2003-2011)	+5.0	35	+6.6
4th grade reading – Scale-score change on NAEP (2003-2011)	+0.1	38	+3.6
8th grade reading – Scale-score change on NAEP (2003-2011)	+1.2	35	+2.3
Poverty Gap (National School Lunch Program, noneligible minus eligible)			
Reading gap – 4th grade NAEP scale score (2011)	27.8	41	27.5
Math gap – 8th grade NAEP scale score (2011)	26.1	36	26.4
Reading-gap change – 4th grade NAEP (2003-2011), negative value = closing gap	+0.6	24	-0.4
Math-gap change – 8th grade NAEP (2003-2011), negative value = closing gap	-1.9	14	-2.0
Achieving Excellence			
Math excellence – Percent advanced on 8th grade NAEP (2011)	9.7%	13	7.8%
Change in math excellence – Percent advanced on NAEP (2003-2011)	+2.6%	27	+2.9%
High School Graduation			
Graduation rate – Public schools (class of 2008)	72.8%	25	71.7%
Change in graduation rate – Public schools (2000-2008)	+12.5%	3	+4.8%
Advanced Placement			
High AP test scores – Scores of 3 or higher per 100 students (2010)	24.6	12	21.9
Change in AP Scores – Change in high scores per 100 students (2000-2010)	+14.9	7	+12.8
GRADE	**C-**	**20**	**C-**

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 (status), improvements over time (change), and achievement gaps between poor and nonpoor students (equity).

The nation as a whole earns 69.7 points, on a 100-point scale, for a grade of C-minus. The leading state, Massachusetts, earns 85.9 points and a B, while the District of Columbia finishes last with a score of 56.3.

Only two states—Massachusetts and New Jersey—demonstrate consistently high marks across all three elements of the K-12 Achievement Index, earning a grade of B-minus or better in each of the three achievement dimensions.



NOTE: State subscores may not sum to total score due to rounding.

SOURCE: EPE Research Center, 2012

STANDARDS, ASSESSMENTS, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Policy Indicators

The national summary column indicates 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.

From *Quality Counts 2012*	North Carolina	Nation
Academic Standards		
English/language arts standards are course- or grade-specific (2011-12)	ES MS HS	33 states
Mathematics standards are course- or grade-specific (2011-12)	ES MS HS	31
Science standards are course- or grade-specific (2011-12)	ES MS HS	26
Social studies/history standards are course- or grade-specific (2011-12)	ES MS HS	26
Supplementary resources – Materials elaborate on standards in all core subjects (2011-12)	Yes	43
Supplementary resources – Materials provided for particular student populations (2011-12)	Yes	45
Assessments		
Test items used to measure student performance		
Multiple-choice items (2011-12)	ES MS HS	51
Short-answer items (2011-12)	No	27
Extended-response items – English/language arts (2011-12)	HS	38
Extended-response items – Other subjects (2011-12)	No	19
Portfolios of student work (2011-12)	No	0
Alignment of assessments to academic standards		
English/language arts (2011-12)	ES MS HS	51
Mathematics (2011-12)	ES MS HS	51
Science (2011-12)	ES MS HS	51
Social studies/history (2011-12)	HS	10
Assessment systems		
Vertically equated scores on assessments in grades 3-8 in English (2011-12)	Yes	21
Vertically equated scores on assessments in grades 3-8 in math (2011-12)	Yes	22
Benchmark assessments or item banks provided to educators (2011-12)	Yes	32
School Accountability (policies must apply to Title I and non-Title I schools)		
State ratings – State assigns ratings to all schools on criteria other than AYP (2011-12)	Yes	24
Statewide student ID – State has a statewide student-identification system (2010)	Yes	51
Rewards – State provides rewards to high-performing or improving schools (2011-12)	Yes	37
Assistance – State provides assistance to low-performing schools (2011-12)	Yes	36
Sanctions – State sanctions low-performing schools (2011-12)	Yes	32
GRADE	**A** (rank= 10)	**B**

Key: E = English, M = Math, S = Science, H = History/social studies
ES = elementary school, MS = middle school, HS = high school

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Efforts to Improve Teaching

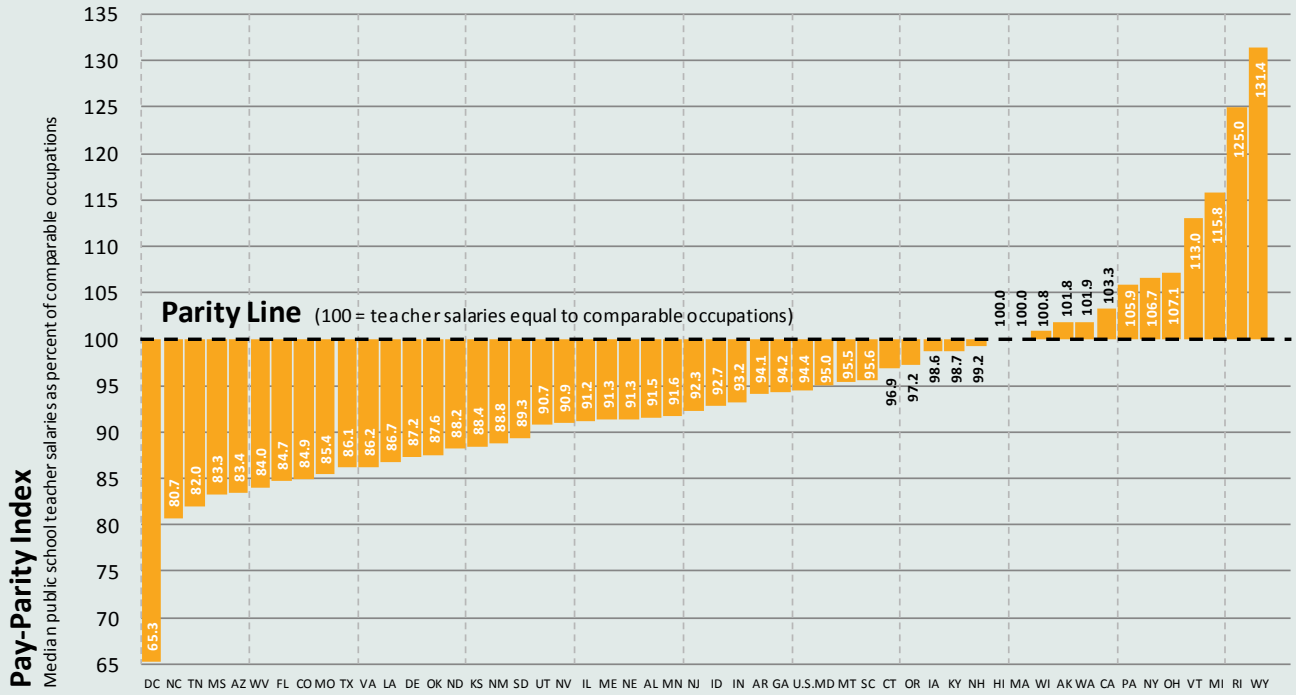
The national summary column indicates the number of states that have enacted a particular policy.

From *Quality Counts 2012*	North Carolina	Nation
Accountability for Quality		
Requirements for initial licensure (2011-12) (* indicates requirements that do not also apply to alternative-route candidates)		
Substantial coursework in subject area(s) taught	No	28 states
Test of basic skills	Yes*	39
Test of subject-specific knowledge	No	43
Test of subject-specific pedagogy	No	4
Student-teaching during teacher training	Yes*	41
Other clinical experiences during teacher training	No	15
Discouraging out-of-field teaching (2011-12)		
Direct parental notification of out-of-field teachers	No	6
Ban or cap on the number of out-of-field teachers	No	7
Evaluating teacher performance (2011-12)		
Formal evaluations of all teachers' performance required	Yes	45
Student achievement is tied to teacher evaluations	Yes	17
Annual basis for teacher evaluations	Yes	20
All evaluators of teachers receive formal training	Yes	29
Teacher education programs (2011-12)		
Rankings/results published for teacher-preparation institutions	Yes	31
Programs accountable for graduates' classroom performance	Yes	16
Data systems to monitor quality (2011)		
State links teachers to student-growth data	Yes	26
State links teachers and their performance data back to teacher education programs	No	10
Incentives and Allocation		
Reduction of entry and transfer barriers (2011-12)		
Alternative-route program for teacher preparation	Yes	50
Teacher-license reciprocity or portability arrangement with other state(s)	Yes	44
Teacher-pension portability across state lines	Yes	25
Salaries and incentives		
Teacher-pay parity – Teacher salaries at least equal to comparable occupations (2010)	No	13
Districts report school-level salaries for teachers (2011-12)	No	12
Pay-for-performance program or pilot rewards teachers for raising student achievement (2011-12)	Yes	11
Differentiated roles for teachers formally recognized by state (2011-12)	No	22
Incentives for teachers taking on differentiated roles (2011-12)	No	15
Financial incentives for teachers to earn national-board certification (2011-12)	Yes	24

Incentives and Allocation (cont.)	**North Carolina**	**Nation**
Managing and allocating teaching talent (2011-12)		
Incentives to teachers working in targeted schools	Yes	20 states
Incentives to teachers working in hard-to-staff teaching-assignment areas	Yes	17
Incentives to board-certified teachers working in targeted schools	No	8
Incentives to principals working in targeted schools	No	10
Building and Supporting Capacity		
Supports for beginning teachers (2011-12)		
Induction program for all new teachers funded by state	Yes	14
Mentoring program for all new teachers funded by state	No	16
Mentoring-program standards for selecting, training, and/or matching mentors	No	13
Reduced workload for all first-year teachers	Yes	3
Professional development (2011-12)		
Formal professional-development standards	Yes	39
Professional development financed by state for all districts	No	23
Districts/schools required to set aside time for professional development	No	16
Professional development aligned with local priorities	Yes	31
School leadership (2011-12)		
Standards for licensure of school administrators	Yes	46
Required internship for aspiring principals	Yes	40
Induction or mentoring program for aspiring principals	No	19
School working conditions		
Program to reduce or limit class size implemented by state (2011-12)	Yes	24
Student-to-teacher ratio median in elementary schools is 15:1 or less (2009-10)	No	28
State tracks condition of school facilities (2011-12)	Yes	25
State posts school-level teacher-survey data on climate, working conditions (2011-12)	Yes	9
GRADE	**C+** (rank= 16)	**C**

Reaching the Parity Line

An original analysis by the EPE Research Center finds that public school teachers nationwide make 94 cents for every dollar earned by workers in 16 comparable occupations. Thirteen 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, 2012. 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 ANALYSIS

Equity and Spending Indicators

From *Quality Counts 2012*	North Carolina State Average	North Carolina Rank	National Average
Equity			
Wealth-Neutrality Score – Relationship between district funding and local property wealth (2009)	0.254	48	0.087
McLoone Index – Actual spending as percent of amount needed to bring all students to median level (2009)	92.2%	14	90.9%
Coefficient of Variation – Amount of disparity in spending across districts within a state (2009)	0.128	10	0.168
Restricted Range – Difference in per-pupil spending levels at the 95th and 5th percentiles (2009)	$2,802	10	$4,428
Spending			
Adjusted per-pupil expenditures (PPE) – Analysis accounts for regional cost differences (2009)	$9,024	44	$11,665
Students funded at or above national average – Percent of students in districts with PPE at or above U.S. average (2009)	6.6%	43	40.5%
Spending Index – Per-pupil spending levels weighted by the degree to which districts meet or approach the national average for expenditures (2009)	83.0	41	89.3
Spending on education – State expenditures on K-12 schooling as a percent of state taxable resources (2009)	2.9%	48	3.9%
GRADE	**D**	**46**	**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 multiplied by 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.

TRANSITIONS AND ALIGNMENT

Education Alignment Policies

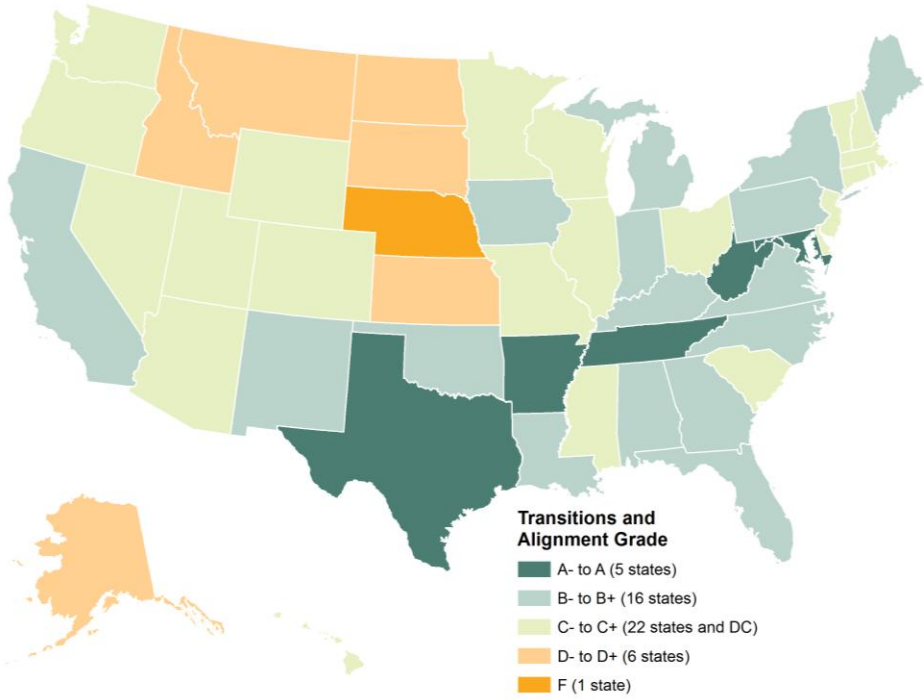
The national summary column indicates the number of states that have enacted a particular policy.

From *Quality Counts 2011*	North Carolina	Nation
Early-Childhood Education (2010-11)		
Early learning – State early-learning standards aligned with K-12 standards	Yes	48 states
School-readiness definition – State formally defines school readiness	Yes	22
School-readiness assessment – Readiness of entering students assessed	No	19
School-readiness intervention – Programs for students not deemed ready	Yes	23
Kindergarten standards – Learning expectations aligned with elementary	Yes	51
Postsecondary Education (2010-11)		
College readiness – State defines college readiness	Yes	33
College preparation – College prep required to earn a high school diploma	Yes	10
Course alignment – Credits for high school diploma aligned with postsecondary system	No	11
Assessment alignment – High school assessment aligned with postsecondary system	No	15
Postsecondary decisions – High school assessment used for postsecondary decisions	No	11
Economy and Workforce (2010-11)		
Work readiness – State K-12 system defines work readiness	Yes	33
Career-tech diploma – State offers high school diploma with career specialization	Yes	38
Industry certification – K-12 has path for industry-recognized certificate or license	Yes	42
Portable credits – K-12 pathway to earn career-tech. credits for postsecondary	Yes	48
GRADE	**B (rank= 11)**	**C+**

A National Perspective

The EPE Research Center examined state efforts to connect the K-12 education system with early learning, higher education, and the world of work. Fourteen key transitions and alignment policies were included in *Quality Counts 2011*.

By the 2010-11 school year, most states had enacted at least eight of the 14 tracked policies. Thirteen states had 10 or more policies in place. At the other end of the spectrum, Montana and South Dakota had just three such policies in place, and Nebraska only two.



SOURCE: EPE Research Center, 2011

NOTES AND SOURCES

Quality Counts 2012

This year's 16th edition of *Quality Counts* examines the American education system from an international perspective. *Quality Counts 2012* also provides a 50-state update on policies and conditions in five distinct areas: Chance for Success; K-12 achievement; standards, assessments, and accountability; teaching; and school finance.

The State Highlights Reports present state-specific summaries of key findings across all six areas of policy and performance that comprise the report's state-grading rubric. Information is drawn from the 2011 and 2012 editions of *Quality Counts*. Reports for the 50 states and the District of Columbia are available on the Web at www.edweek.org/go/qc12shr

State Policy Indicators

Quality Counts regularly tracks and grades state progress in six categories comprising more than 150 different state-by-state indicators. The 2012 installment of the report also includes a special focus on international comparisons in K-12 education. Most of these 50-state indicators are based on original analyses and state-survey data from the EPE Research Center. The report also draws on published information from other organizations.

The methodology section of *Quality Counts* provides detailed descriptions of our indicators and procedures for grading the states. That information can be accessed online at www.edweek.org/go/qc12 (2012) and www.edweek.org/go/qc11 (2011).

Between June and October of 2011, 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 (2012)

***Elementary Reading and Middle School Mathematics*:** 2011 State NAEP assessment. U.S. Department of Education, 2011.

***High School Graduation*:** Cumulative Promotion Index, calculated using the U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data, 2007-08. EPE Research Center, 2011.

***Other Indicators*:** EPE Research Center analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, 2010.

K-12 Achievement (2012)

***Reading and Mathematics Achievement*:** 2011 State NAEP assessment. U.S. Department of Education, 2011.

***High School Graduation*:** Cumulative Promotion Index, calculated using the U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data, 2007-08. EPE Research Center, 2011.

***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, 2010.

Standards, Assessments, and Accountability (2012)

***Assessment item types and alignment to state standards*:** EPE Research Center review of testing calendars and other materials from state education agency websites, as verified by states, 2011.

***State has a statewide student-identification system*:** Data Quality Campaign, 2010.

***Other Indicators*:** EPE Research Center annual state policy survey, 2011.

The Teaching Profession (2012)

***Data Systems to Monitor Quality*:** Data Quality Campaign, 2011.

***Teacher-Pay Parity*:** EPE Research Center analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, 2009 and 2010.

***Student-to-Teacher Ratio*:** EPE Research Center analysis of U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data, 2009-10.

***Other Indicators*:** EPE Research Center annual state policy survey, 2011.

School Finance Analysis (2012)

***Original EPE Research Center Analysis of Equity and Spending*:** Data for these analyses were obtained from a variety of sources, including: U.S. Census Bureau's Public Elementary-Secondary Education Finance Data for 2009; U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08, and 2008-09 (district-level data); NCES' Comparable Wage Index 2005; U.S. Census Bureau's Small-Area Income and Poverty Estimates 2009; U.S. Department of Education's School District Demographics data, based on the 2000 U.S. Census; NCES, Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: School Year 2008-09 (Fiscal Year 2009), June 2011; and 2009 gross-state-product data from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Transitions and Alignment (2011)

***All Indicators*:** EPE Research Center annual state policy survey, 2010.

QUALITY COUNTS 2012

The Global Challenge

Education in a Competitive World

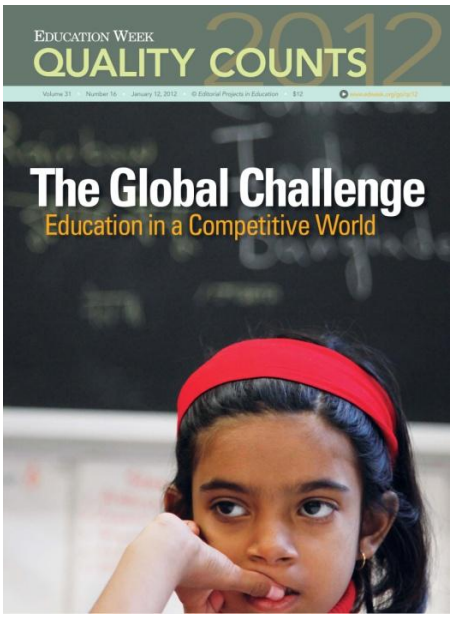
The 16th edition of *Quality Counts* explores the American education system from an international perspective. The report also provides a 50-state update on policies and conditions in five of the areas monitored by the report on an ongoing basis: Chance for Success; K-12 achievement; standards, assessments, and accountability; teaching; and school finance.

Highlights from this year's report

A comprehensive look at **U.S. Education in a Competitive Global Environment**, including timely journalistic coverage and original data and analyses

EPE Research Center's **Chance-for-Success Index**, a cradle-to-career perspective on the importance of education throughout a person's lifetime

State of the States—Our comprehensive annual review of state policy and performance, this year highlighting: Chance for Success; K-12 achievement; standards, assessments, and accountability; the teaching profession; and school finance



Online Extras

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

Webcast and Event Archive—On-demand viewing of video from the *Quality Counts* release event featuring a presentation of highlights from the report and perspectives from leading experts discussing the impact of international education policy and practices on U.S. schools

Education Counts—Access hundreds of education indicators from *Quality Counts* using our exclusive online database

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