The Network for Public Education

Valuing Public Education:

A 50 STATE REPORT CARD

2016

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introduction

The Network for Public Education believes that public education is a pillar of our democratic society. We believe that public schools can serve all students well, inspire their intrinsic motivation, and prepare them to make responsible choices for themselves and for our society. Public education creates citizens. Its doors are open to all, regardless of their race, religion, gender, ethnicity, or disability status. It teaches young people to live with others who may be different from themselves.

Educating all children is a civic responsibility, not a consumer good. Sustaining a public education system of high quality is a job for the entire community, whether or not they have children in public schools and even if they have no children. An investment in the community's children is an investment in the future, a duty we all share.

Public education creates citizens. It teaches young people to live with others who may be different from themselves.

Our report, *Valuing Public Education: A 50 State Report Card,* evaluates how well each of the fifty states and the District of Columbia support their public schools, based on objective and measurable factors aligned with our values. We promote specific policies that will help make our public schools vibrant and strong—a well-trained, professional teaching force, adequate and equitable funding wisely spent, and policies that give all students a better opportunity for success.

These measures are not always easy to quantify, but in the current environment, it is important to find a way to recognize those states that have invested in their public schools in positive ways.

And it is also important to identify states that have weakened public education—by seeking to privatize their schools or turn them into profit-making ventures, as well as states that have aggressively instituted a regime of high stakes testing that unfairly sorts, ranks and demoralizes students, educators and schools. Unlike other organizations such as *The American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC)* and Michelle Rhee's *StudentsFirst,* whose report cards rank states in relation to their willingness to privatize public education and weaken the status of the teaching profession, we take another path. We give low marks to states that devalue public education, attack teachers and place high stakes outcomes on standardized tests.

It is our hope as advocates for public education that this report will rally parents, educators, and other concerned citizens to strengthen their commitment to public schools. It is time to turn away from policies that are clearly harmful to children. Sustaining our system of free, equitable and democratically-controlled public schools that serve all children, we believe, is the civil rights issue of our time.

Diane Ravitch

Diane Ravitch
Co-founder and President
Network for Public Education

Why This Report Card Matters

The Network for Public Education created this report card because it is time to focus the national debate on research-based strategies to improve education and create equal opportunities for all children. Our report card, *Valuing Public Education: A 50 State Report Card,* evaluates how well each of the fifty states and the District of Columbia are working to achieve that goal.

NPE values specific policies that will make our public schools vibrant and strong—a well-trained, professional teaching force, adequate and equitable funding wisely spent, and policies that give all students a better opportunity for success, such as integrated schools and low stakes attached to any standardized tests they take. We applaud those states that have resisted the forces of privatization and profiteering that in recent years have been called "reforms."

Our hope is that this report card will steer us away from policies that undermine our public schools and toward policies that will make our public schools better for all children. It is both a roadmap and a yardstick for citizens and policymakers to guide them and measure their states' efforts at making public schools more equitable places for students to learn.

Our hope is that this report card will **steer us away from policies that undermine our public schools** and **toward policies** that will make our public schools **better for all children.**

executive summary

Approach and Methodology

We evaluated states on six criteria aligned with our values. Laws, policies and practices that impact these criteria were rated. We also considered the measurable effects those laws and policies have on schools. For example, although there are no longer laws that allow racial segregation, a state's housing and school choice laws affect the student demographics of schools.

With the assistance of Francesca Lopez, Ph.D. and her research team at the University of Arizona, we identified 29 measurable factors that guided the ratings of the six criteria. The Arizona team worked to find the best, most contemporary sources of information, created a 0-4 scale for ratings, and then evaluated each state on the 29 factors. The factors that comprised each criterion were then averaged to create a letter grade. Throughout the process, we updated sources when they became available, adjusting grades to align with the changing landscape of laws.

The average of the six letter grades was then used to create a GPA, which was converted into an overall state letter grade. As a matter of principle, NPE does not believe in assigning a single letter grade for evaluation purposes. We are opposed to such simplistic methods when used, for example, to evaluate schools. In this case, our letter grades carry no stakes. No state will be rewarded or punished as a result of our judgment about their support or lack of support for public education. We assign the grade, and provide the sources from which it is derived, to alert the public about whether their state is acting as a responsible guardian of its public schools.

A full explanation of our methodology along with the research rationale for the factors that we chose to include can be found in this report and its appendix.

We assign the grade, along with the sources from which it is derived, to alert the public about whether their state is acting as a responsible guardian of its public schools.

Major Findings

State policies and laws enacted since the beginning of the *No Child Left Behind Act* have taken a toll on our public schools. Prior to *NCLB*, nearly every state would have earned a grade of "A" in the criteria, *No High Stakes Testing*. This year, only 5 states earned a grade of "A." Grades in the criteria *Chance for Success* are lower than they would have been a decade ago, due to rising numbers of students living in poverty and increased racial isolation in schools. And when it comes to school finance, our national grade is a dismal "D."

Still there are bright spots. Seven states have rejected charters, vouchers and other "reforms" that undermine community public schools. Three states — Alabama, Montana and Nebraska — each earn an "A" for their rejection of both high stakes testing and privatization. No state, however, received high grades across the board. For example, although Alabama scored high in resistance to high stakes testing and privatization, its schools are underfunded and far too many students live in poverty or near poverty in the state.

At the end of this summary, the states are ranked by their overall GPAs. Throughout the report you can see each state's grade for each criteria. On our website, www.networkforpubliceducation.org, we provide an interactive map to allow readers to see the full landscape of grades at a glance.

Admittedly, we were tough graders. No state overall grade exceeded a "C." We did not assign scores based simply on comparative measures, but rather against the values we hold and research supports. There are no "silver bullets" when it comes to improving schools. The myth that "three great teachers in a row" can close the achievement gap has always been a ploy. However, if states are willing to invest time and money guided by the right values, we will see steady progress for our public schools and our nation's children. We hope that the citizens of each state reflect on areas where their state needs to improve, and promote those reforms that will result in a better grade next year.

If we are willing to invest time and money **guided by the right values,** we will see **steady progress for our public schools** and **our nation's children.**

State Grades

Each state received an overall grade, as well as grades on each of the following six criteria: No High Stakes Testing, Professionalization of Teaching, Resistance to Privatization, School Finance, Spend Taxpayer Resources Wisely, and Chance for Success. The six letter grades, which ranged from "A" to "F", were averaged[1] to create the overall GPA and letter grade for each state. States are ranked by their GPAs in the list below.

States with GPAs below 1.0 received a grade of "F"; those with GPAs between 1.0-1.99 received a grade of "D"; and states with GPAs between 2.0 and 2. 5 received a grade of "C." There were no GPAs that exceeded 2.5; therefore no overall grades of "A" or "B" were awarded in 2016.

State	GPA	Grade	State	GPA	Grade	State	GPA	Grade
Iowa	2.50	C	Rhode Island	1.83	D	Virginia	1.33	D
Nebraska	2.50	C	Wisconsin	1.83	D	Washington	1.33	D
Vermont	2.50	C	Wyoming	1.83	D	Louisiana	1.17	D
Montana	2.33	C	DC	1.80	D	Arkansas	1.00	D
West Virginia	2.33	C	Alabama	1.67	D	Colorado	1.00	D
Alaska	2.17	C	Hawaii	1.67	D	Nevada	1.00	D
Massachusetts	2.17	C	Maine	1.67	D	New Mexico	1.00	D
New Hampshire	2.17	C	Minnesota	1.67	D	Oklahoma	1.00	D
New Jersey	2.17	C	South Carolina	1.67	D	Tennessee	1.00	D
North Dakota	2.17	C	Delaware	1.50	D	Florida	0.83	F
South Dakota	2.17	C	Michigan	1.50	D	Georgia	0.83	F
Connecticut	2.00	C	Pennsylvania	1.50	D	Indiana	0.83	F
Maryland	2.00	C	Utah	1.50	D	North Carolina	0.83	F
Illinois	1.83	D	California	1.33	D	Arizona	0.67	F
Kansas	1.83	D	Missouri	1.33	D	Idaho	0.67	F
Kentucky	1.83	D	Ohio	1.33	D	Texas	0.67	F
New York	1.83	D	Oregon	1.33	D	Mississippi	0.50	F

[1]The six letter grades were converted to numbers as follow: "A"=4, "B"=3, "C"=2, "D"=1, "F"=0.
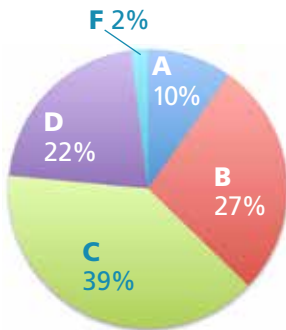
report card

No High Stakes Testing

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

F 2%
A 10%
B 27%
C 39%
D 22%

Tests become "high stakes" when they are used to make critical decisions about students, teachers or schools. Every time high stakes are attached to test scores to determine grade retention, high school graduation, the dismissal of a teacher, or a school closing, there are negative consequences for students. The scores themselves become less reliable as diagnostic measures of learning, curriculum and instruction. The results of high stakes tests are an especially unfair and often arbitrary method to make important and irrevocable decisions about a student's future – and can have discriminatory impacts on particular racial and ethnic groups.[1]

The reliance on standardized tests as instruments by which to make decisions about students, schools, and educators has accelerated since *No Child Left Behind*, and even more alarmingly, with the *Race to the Top* grant program and federal waivers.

High school exit exams, which became popular during *NCLB*, have been shown to lower graduation rates.[2] Their negative impact is likely to increase as Common Core exams are phased in as graduation requirements. Even in those cases where exit exams do not appear to affect overall graduation rates, they can have disparate and devastating effects on particular groups of students, such as English Language Learners.

Some states also use tests to decide whether students are promoted or retained, especially during the elementary years. Although retaining students in order to increase their achievement has popular appeal, it has no conclusive evidence of effectiveness. The National Research Council's review of the literature[3] on retention concluded that: retention leads to higher drop-out rates and ultimately lower achievement; more boys are retained than girls; black and Latino students are far more likely to be retained than white students by ages 9-11, and the retention gap increases as students progress through the grades.

[1] For an excellent summary of the discriminatory effects of tests see FairTest. (2010). Racial Justice and Standardized Educational Testing. Retrieved from http://fairtest.org/sites/default/files/racial_justice_and_testing_12-10.pdf

[2] Warren, J., Jenkins, K., & Kulick, R. (2006) High school exit examinations and state-level completion and GED rates, 1975 through 2002. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 28(32): 131-152. http://epa.sagepub.com/content/28/2/131.abstract doi:10.3102/01623737028002131

[3] See Chapter 6 of Heubert J., & Hauser, R. Editors. Committee on Appropriate Test Use, National Research Council. (1999). High stakes: Testing for tracking, promotion and graduation. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press http://www.nap.edu/catalog/6336/high-stakes-testing-for-tracking-promotion-and-graduation DOI: 10.17226/6336

No High Stakes Testing *continued*

High stakes testing now includes the evaluation of teachers and principals, as a result of *Race to the Top* grants and *NCLB* waivers. Both required that student test scores be linked to educators' evaluations. The common method of doing so is to create a value added measure (VAM) or growth score, which attempts to comparatively measure the influence of a teacher or principal on the test results of students. This radical departure from traditional evaluation has occurred despite a lack of evidence of its validity and reliability. Peer-reviewed studies point out the potentially negative impacts of this practice, including the dismissal of quality teachers and the undermining of morale.[4]

High stakes testing has also caused the narrowing of the curriculum and excessive classroom time devoted to preparing for tests. Teachers are incentivized to teach students they believe are likely to test well, or show more test score growth.

We give high grades to states that reject high stakes testing for students and teachers. We used the following three factors to determine each state's grade for its reliance on high stakes testing:

1. **Rejection of the use of exit exams to determine high school graduation**
2. **Rejection of the use of test results to determine student promotion**
3. **Educator evaluation systems that do not include student test results**

| State	Grade	State	Grade	State	Grade	State	Grade	State	Grade
Alabama	A	Hawaii	C	Michigan	C	North Carolina	C	Utah	B
Alaska	C	Idaho	D	Minnesota	B	North Dakota	B	Vermont	A
Arizona	C	Illinois	B	Mississippi	F	Ohio	D	Virginia	D
Arkansas	D	Indiana	D	Missouri	C	Oklahoma	D	Washington	C
California	B	Iowa	B	Montana	A	Oregon	C	West Virginia	B
Colorado	C	Kansas	B	Nebraska	A	Pennsylvania	C	Wisconsin	C
Connecticut	B	Kentucky	C	Nevada	C	Rhode Island	B	Wyoming	B
Delaware	C	Louisiana	D	New Hampshire	A	South Carolina	B		
DC	B	Maine	C	New Jersey	C	South Dakota	B		
Florida	D	Maryland	D	New Mexico	D	Tennessee	C		
Georgia	C	Massachusetts	C	New York	D	Texas	C		

[4] An excellent summary of the research and problems with the practice. Teacher Evaluation Should Not Rest on Student Test Scores (Revised 2014). FairTest: National Center for Fair and Open Testing. Retrieved from http://www.fairtest.org/teacher-evaluation-fact-sheet-2014

report card

Professionalization of Teaching

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

B 4%
F 12%
C 35%
D 49%
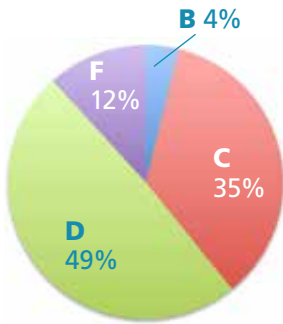
Countries with model education systems value their teachers. In Finland, teaching is not only the most highly respected profession; elementary school teaching is the most sought-after job.[5] Teacher preparation is university-based and rigorous. Professional development and classroom autonomy are integral features of a teacher's work.

Many of the current popular American reforms give lip service to the professionalization of teaching while displaying an appalling lack of understanding of what professionalization truly means. Teachers are viewed as interchangeable — experience is discounted, even viewed as a flaw. Courses that provide potential teachers with a deep understanding of the history of the profession, learning theory or cognitive development are regarded as fluff. Instead, current reforms promote online teacher preparation, on the job training and summer training that push inexperienced young people, with inadequate preparation, into classrooms. Yet research tells us that fast track teacher preparation and licensure programs serve to lower professional status.[6]

[5] Center on International Educational Benchmarking (2015). Teacher and principal quality: Finland. NCEE. Retrieved from http://www.ncee.org/ programs-affiliates/center-on-international-education-benchmarking/top-performing-countries/finland-overview/finland-teacher-and-principal-quality/

[6] Milner, H. R. (2013). Policy reforms and de-professionalization of teaching. NEPC. Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center. Retrieved from http://nepc.colorado.edu/files/pb-deprof-teaching_0.pdf

report card

Professionalization of Teaching *continued*

Teaching should be a long-term career commitment. Research shows that experience matters and leads to better student outcomes, including increased learning, better attendance and fewer disciplinary referrals.[7] Advanced content degrees, especially in mathematics and science, have a positive effect on student learning[8] and good pre-service field experience builds teacher effectiveness, confidence and job satisfaction.[9]

We gave high grades to states that exhibited a commitment to teaching as a profession. The following nine factors were used to determine each state's grade:

1. **Experienced teachers**
2. **Average early-career teacher salary**
3. **Average mid-career teacher salary**
4. **Rejection of merit pay**
5. **Proportion of teachers prepared in university programs**
6. **Low teacher attrition rates**
7. **Teachers' commitment to stay in the profession**
8. **Proportion of teachers with tenure**
9. **Presence of demanding requirements for certification**

State	Grade	State	Grade	State	Grade	State	Grade	State	Grade
Alabama	D	Hawaii	D	Michigan	C	North Carolina	F	Utah	D
Alaska	C	Idaho	D	Minnesota	D	North Dakota	C	Vermont	C
Arizona	F	Illinois	C	Mississippi	D	Ohio	C	Virginia	D
Arkansas	D	Indiana	F	Missouri	D	Oklahoma	D	Washington	D
California	C	Iowa	B	Montana	C	Oregon	D	West Virginia	D
Colorado	F	Kansas	D	Nebraska	C	Pennsylvania	C	Wisconsin	C
Connecticut	D	Kentucky	D	Nevada	C	Rhode Island	C	Wyoming	C
Delaware	D	Louisiana	D	New Hampshire	D	South Carolina	D		
DC	D	Maine	C	New Jersey	C	South Dakota	C		
Florida	F	Maryland	C	New Mexico	D	Tennessee	D		
Georgia	D	Massachusetts	D	New York	B	Texas	F		

[7] For a summary of studies, see Sawchuk, S. (2015, March 25). New studies find that for teachers, experience really does matter. Edweek. Retrieved from http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2015/03/25/new-studies-find-that-for-teachers-experience.html.

[8] Goldhaber, D.D., & Brewer, D.J. (1996). Evaluating the degree of teacher degree level on educational performance. NCES. Westat, Inc., Rockville, MD. Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/pubs97/97535l.pdf
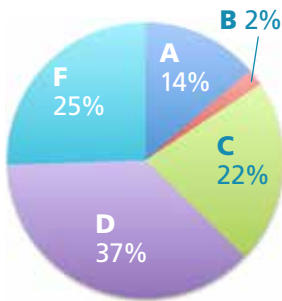
[9] Oh, D., Ankers, A., Llamas, J., & Tomyoy, C. (2005). Impact of pre-service student teaching experience on urban school teachers. Journal of Instructional Psychology, 3. https://www.questia.com/library/journal/1G1-132048075/impact-of-pre-service-student-teaching-experience

Resistance to Privatization

A 14%
B 2%
C 22%
D 37%
F 25%

"School choice" policies move the control of schools from democratic, local control to private control. Market-based approaches such as vouchers, charters, and parent trigger laws take the governance of schools out of the hands of democratically elected officials and the local communities they serve, and place it in the hands of a few individuals — often elites or corporations with no connections to the community.

Such policies lead to worsening inequities within the educational system as a whole, drain resources from neighborhood schools, do not produce better results in general,[10] increase segregation[11] and often leave local public schools with fewer funds to educate students with the highest needs.[12] They also serve to undermine the public's willingness to invest in the education of all children while creating wider inequities across the system as a whole.

Privatization advocates claim that public schools are failing, even as their policies pull the most successful and motivated students out of local public schools and reduce their funding. Resources are shifted out of the community school while "alternatives" such as charter schools often receive substantial outside funding in addition to public funds, for which there is little accountability.

We believe in strengthening community schools. Therefore we evaluate states as to whether they have laws, policies and practices that support and protect their community public schools.

We gave low grades if the state helps to finance private school vouchers, or allows for education income tax credits or Educational Savings Accounts that grant parents the discretion to pay for their children's private and parochial school tuition with funds that would otherwise be tax dollars.

We negatively marked states if they fund charter schools, but did not subject them to the same regulations and oversight as public schools. Lack of oversight encourages abusive student disciplinary practices and/or fraud and misuse of public funds. We graded them negatively if they provide charters with buildings free of charge, or help pay for their facilities.

[10]See the charter school, public school comparison showing small advantages for charters in reading, and small disadvantages in math when compared with similar "traditional public schools." Center for Research on Education Outcomes (2013). National Charter School Study 2013.CREDO. Stanford, CA, CREDO at Stanford University. Retrieved from: http://credo.stanford.edu/documents/NCSS%202013%20Final%20Draft.pdf

[11] Frankenberg, E., Siegel-Hawley, G., & Wang, J. (2011). Choice without Equity: Charter School Segregation, Education Policy Analysis Archives, 19(1). http://epaa.asu.edu/ojs/article/view/779%2018%20Nov.%202015 doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.14507/epaa.v19n1.2011.

[12]An excellent source of research on this topic can be found here: Rothberg, I. (2014, February 01). Charter schools and the risk of increased segregation. Edweek. Retrieved from http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2014/02/01/kappan_rotberg.html

Resistance to Privatization *continued*

We assessed states according to how they control the growth of charters, and whether the state has "parent trigger" laws. These laws allow public schools, along with their publicly-financed facilities, to be acquired by privately managed charters via petitions signed by parents at the school level, a process which has been shown to be open to manipulation and abuse.

Finally, we lowered states' grades if they have laws that allow students to transfer across or within district lines, as studies reveal this weakens community support for their local schools and tends to have a segregating effect, similar to the impact of vouchers and charter schools.[13]

We gave high grades to states that support their community schools by resisting privatization. Grades were assigned using the following four measurable factors:

1. **Degree to which the state protects its community public schools, as measured by whether they disallow vouchers, tax credits or ESEAs; require strong charter school oversight and accountability; and bar inter- or intra-district transfers**

2. **Rejection of the public financing of charter facilities**

3. **Willingness to put strong controls on charter school growth**

4. **Rejection of parent trigger laws**

State	Grade	State	Grade	State	Grade	State	Grade	State	Grade
Alabama	A	Hawaii	D	Michigan	D	North Carolina	F	Utah	D
Alaska	D	Idaho	D	Minnesota	F	North Dakota	A	Vermont	B
Arizona	F	Illinois	C	Mississippi	F	Ohio	F	Virginia	D
Arkansas	D	Indiana	F	Missouri	C	Oklahoma	D	Washington	C
California	F	Iowa	C	Montana	A	Oregon	C	West Virginia	A
Colorado	F	Kansas	C	Nebraska	A	Pennsylvania	D	Wisconsin	C
Connecticut	D	Kentucky	A	Nevada	D	Rhode Island	D	Wyoming	D
Delaware	D	Louisiana	F	New Hampshire	C	South Carolina	D		
DC	D	Maine	C	New Jersey	D	South Dakota	A		
Florida	F	Maryland	C	New Mexico	D	Tennessee	F		
Georgia	F	Massachusetts	C	New York	D	Texas	F		

[13] Frankenberg, E., Siegel-Hawley, G., & Wang, J. (2011). Choice without Equity: Charter School Segregation, Education Policy Analysis Archives, 19(1). http://epaa.asu.edu/ojs/article/view/779%2018%20Nov.%202015 doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.14507/epaa.v19n1.2011.

See also, Chapter 9 in, Burris, C.C. (2014). On the same track: How schools can join the twenty-first century struggle against resegregation. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

See also, Smith, J. A. (2015, Feb. 02). As parents get more choice, S.F. schools resegregate. San Francisco Public Press. Retrieved from http://sfpublicpress.org/news/2015-02-as-parents-get-more-choice-sf-schools-resegregate.
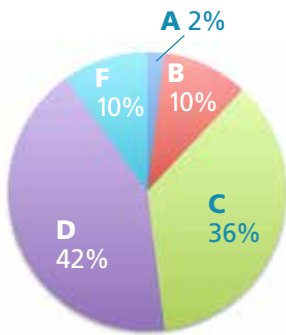
School Finance

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

A 2%
B 10%
F 10%
C 36%
D 42%

In order for all students to have equitable educational opportunities, states must adequately and fairly fund their schools. We know that the level of poverty in a school is the single best predictor of average student performance.[14]

Money matters in education. More spending is positively associated with better learning outcomes. Resources like smaller class sizes, and more support staff lead to significantly higher achievement and graduation rates – especially for poor and minority students.[15]

Yet despite concerns about gaps in student performance, states have still not implemented policies that address inequitable funding between schools attended by the children of the rich and the poor. During the past decade, in fact, the gap in spending between rich and poor districts grew by 44 percent.[16]

Equitable educational opportunity can only be achieved when every child and every school has access to the resources and services needed for academic success. States must sufficiently fund public education and then implement financial policies that are "progressive," meaning they provide the most funds to districts that demonstrate the greatest need.[17]

[14]Silvernail, D., Sloan, J., Paul, C., Johnson, A. & Stump, E. (2012). The relationships between school poverty and student achievement in Maine. Maine Education Policy Research Institute. Retrieved from https://usm.maine.edu/sites/default/files/cepare/poverty_achievement_Web.pdf

[15]Baker, B. (2012). Revisiting that age old question: Does money matter in education? Albert Shanker Institute. Retrieved from http://www.shankerinstitute.org/resource/does-money-matter

See also, Jackson, C., Kirabo. Johnson, R., & Persico, C. (2015). The Effects of school spending on educational and economic outcomes: Evidence from school finance reforms. The Quarterly Journal of Economics. Retrieved from http://cep.lse.ac.uk/seminarpapers/13-03-15-KJ.pdf

[16]Barshay, J. (2015, April 6). The gap between rich and poor schools grew 44% over a decade. Hechinger Report. Retrieved from http://hechingerreport.org/the-gap-between-rich-and-poor-schools-grew-44-percent-over-a-decade/

[17]Baker, B., Sciarra, D., & Farrie, D. (2015). Is school funding fair? A national report card, 4th Ed. Education Law Center. Retrieved from http://www.schoolfundingfairness.org/

School Finance *continued*

We gave high grades to states that implemented the most adequate and equitable funding. Low grades were assigned to states with inadequate and inequitable distribution of funds.

The following three factors were used to determine each state's grade for equitable and adequate school financing:

1. **Per-pupil expenditure adjusted for poverty, wages and district size/density**

2. **Resources spent on education in relation to the state's ability to pay based on gross product**

3. **Increased proportion of aid given to high-poverty districts than to low-poverty**

State	Grade	State	Grade	State	Grade	State	Grade	State	Grade
Alabama	F	Hawaii	D	Michigan	C	North Carolina	D	Utah	D
Alaska	B	Idaho	F	Minnesota	C	North Dakota	F	Vermont	C
Arizona	F	Illinois	D	Mississippi	D	Ohio	B	Virginia	D
Arkansas	D	Indiana	B	Missouri	D	Oklahoma	D	Washington	D
California	D	Iowa	C	Montana	D	Oregon	D	West Virginia	C
Colorado	D	Kansas	C	Nebraska	C	Pennsylvania	C	Wisconsin	C
Connecticut	C	Kentucky	D	Nevada	F	Rhode Island	C	Wyoming	C
Delaware	C	Louisiana	C	New Hampshire	C	South Carolina	C		
DC	-	Maine	C	New Jersey	A	South Dakota	D		
Florida	D	Maryland	C	New Mexico	D	Tennessee	D		
Georgia	D	Massachusetts	B	New York	B	Texas	D		

Spend Taxpayer Resources Wisely
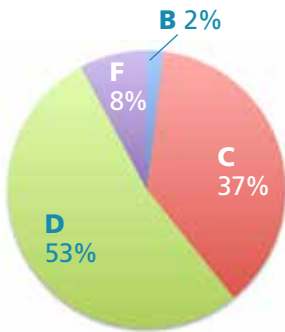
Although the amount and distribution of state funding for education is critical, how these dollars are spent is equally important. We believe we must invest tax dollars in the classroom to reduce class size and invest in early childhood education. Because the relationship between students and teacher is vital, we are also concerned about the growth in online learning and virtual schools.

While access to early education cannot completely erase the devastating effects of poverty on cognitive development, high quality pre-school and all-day Kindergarten are especially important for students who begin school the furthest behind. Research has long supported the benefit of early childhood education. It is time that those opportunities become free and open to all.

The attention each child receives during her school years also matters. Lower class size has been linked conclusively to improved learning and a host of other benefits, especially for students of color, students in poverty, students with disabilities, and those who are linguistically or culturally different.[18] Smaller classes have also been correlated with lower rates of disciplinary referrals and less teacher attrition. When surveyed, teachers often say that reducing class size would be the best way to improve their effectiveness.[19] Yet class sizes remain too large in many schools. In many states, class sizes have risen sharply since 2008, especially in urban schools where lower class sizes would benefit the neediest students the most.[20]

Rather than providing a more personalized learning experience through proven methods such as lower class size, current reforms emphasize the expansion of technology. Under the guise of delivering a more personalized education, many states are encouraging enrollment in virtual schools or online classes, in which students have their education delivered via computers, rather than by a teacher as part of a community of learners. Replacing teachers with technology is misleadingly called "personalized learning" when it actually reduces students' direct interaction with other human beings.

[18]Dynarski, S., Hyman, J., & Schanzenbach, D. W. (2011). Experimental Evidence on the Effect of Childhood Investment on Postsecondary Attainment and Degree Completion. NBER Working Paper. Retrieved from: http://users.nber.org/~dynarski/Dynarski_Hyman_Schanzenbach.pdf

See also, Institute of Education Sciences. (2003). Identifying and Implementing Educational Practices Supported by Rigorous Evidence: A User Friendly Guide. U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/evidence_based/evidence_based.asp

See also, Krueger, A. K. (2003). Economic Considerations and Class Size. The Economic Journal, 113. Retrieved from http://www.classsizematters.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/economic-considerations-and-class-size.pdf

[19]A Project of Scholastic and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. (2014). America's teachers on the teaching profession. Primary Sources, 3rd Ed. Retrieved from http://www.scholastic.com/primarysources/PrimarySources-2014update.pdf

[20]Leachman, M., Albares, N., Masterson, K., & Wallace, M. (2015, December 10). Most States Have Cut School Funding, and Some Continue Cutting. [Blog Post]. Retrieved from http://www.cbpp.org/research/state-budget-and-tax/most-states-have-cut-school-funding-and-some-continue-cutting

Spend Taxpayer Resources Wisely *continued*

STATE THAT RECEIVED "B":

Montana

Yet the growth of virtual schools is rapidly occurring without sufficient measures of accountability, oversight or evidence of effectiveness.[21] In 2012, the on-time graduation rates for virtual schools was less than half that of the national average—a dismal 37.5 percent.[22] A recent report from The Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) stated that students in virtual schools learn close to nothing in math over the course of 180 days.[23]

We give high grades to states that have policies that invest in early childhood education, keep class sizes small and reject virtual schools.

We used the following four factors to determine each state's grade for whether it spends taxpayers' resources wisely:

1. **Lower class sizes**
2. **Less variation in class size by school type (e.g. urban vs. suburban)**
3. **Greater proportions of students in publicly funded pre-K and full-day Kindergarten**
4. **Minimal proportions of students in Virtual Schools**

State	Grade	State	Grade	State	Grade	State	Grade	State	Grade
Alabama	D	Hawaii	C	Michigan	D	North Carolina	D	Utah	D
Alaska	C	Idaho	F	Minnesota	D	North Dakota	D	Vermont	C
Arizona	D	Illinois	C	Mississippi	D	Ohio	D	Virginia	D
Arkansas	D	Indiana	F	Missouri	D	Oklahoma	D	Washington	F
California	C	Iowa	C	Montana	B	Oregon	D	West Virginia	C
Colorado	D	Kansas	D	Nebraska	D	Pennsylvania	D	Wisconsin	D
Connecticut	C	Kentucky	C	Nevada	F	Rhode Island	D	Wyoming	D
Delaware	C	Louisiana	C	New Hampshire	D	South Carolina	C		
DC	C	Maine	D	New Jersey	C	South Dakota	C		
Florida	C	Maryland	C	New Mexico	D	Tennessee	D		
Georgia	D	Massachusetts	C	New York	C	Texas	D		

[21]Molnar, A. (Ed.); Huerta, L., Shafer, S. R., Barbour, M.K., Miron, G., & Gulosino, C. (2015). Virtual schools in the U.S. 2015: Politics, performance, policy, and research evidence. Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center. Retrieved from http://nepc.colorado.edu/publication/virtual-schools-annual-2015

[22]Miron, G., Hovrwitz, B., & Gulosino, C. (2013). Virtual schools in the U.S. 2013: Politics, performance, policy and research evidence. Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center.

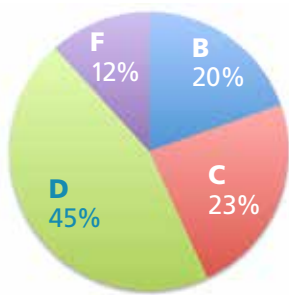[23]Woodworth, J. et.al. (2015).Online charter schools study: 2015. Stanford, CA: CREDO at Stanford University. Retrieved from: http://credo.stanford.edu/pdfs/Online%20Charter%20Study%20Final.pdf

Chance for Success

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

There are many societal factors that affect the likelihood of a student's academic success in school. From birth, interactions with the environment can have a profound effect on an infant's communication, cognitive and motor development. Social and physical stressors have been shown to be significant negative contributors to long-term learning and behavioral outcomes,[24] and such stressors are experienced more often by children who grow up in poverty.[25] Students from low-income families are more likely to suffer from inadequate nutrition and medical care, and exposure to environmental toxins.

State policies directly affect the income, living conditions and support received by students and their parents or guardians. States can provide job training programs and employment opportunities to help families prosper. They set minimum wage laws. And when some families have a member employed full-time and yet they still live in poverty or near poverty, state policies are partly to blame. As we realize the profound negative effect of poverty on school success, it is only fair that states also be judged by the percentage of their students who are poor.

The social benefits of an integrated society are clear. Its benefits extend to racially and socio-economically integrated schooling, which is associated with better outcomes for all students.[26] Despite the benefits of integration, segregation is on the rise.

[24]Shonkoff, J., Richter, L., van der Gaag, J., & Bhutta, Z. (2012). An integrated scientific framework for child survival and early childhood development. Pediatrics, 129(2), 460-472. Retrieved from http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/129/2/e460

[25]Shonkoff, J. (2010). Building a new biodevelopmental framework to guide the future of early childhood policy. Child Development, 81, 357-367. Retrieved from http://developingchild.harvard.edu/people/jack-shonkoff/

[26]Orfield, G., & Frankenberg, E. (2014). Brown at 60: Great progress, a long retreat and an uncertain future. The Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles, rev. 5/5/14). Retrieved from http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/brown-at-60-great-progress-a-long-retreat-and-an-uncertain-future/Brown-at-60-051814.pdf

Chance for Success *continued*

To a large extent, residential segregation is responsible for school segregation. However, state policies that promote school choice typically exacerbate segregation[27] and charters often isolate students by race and class.[28] Therefore, even beyond housing policies, the education policies and incentives that states put in place influence the degree of segregation in their public schools.[29] In some schools, segregation is so extreme that the UCLA Civil Rights Project describes them as apartheid schools.[30]

We gave high grades to states that have fewer students living in poverty or near poverty, and have the most integrated schools.

The following three factors related to school success were used to determine each state's grade for a student's chance for success:

1. **The proportion of children who live in households that are not low-income**

2. **The proportion of children who live in households where full-time employment results in income not below the poverty line**

3. **The extent to which its schools are integrated by race and ethnicity**

State	Grade	State	Grade	State	Grade	State	Grade	State	Grade
Alabama	F	Hawaii	B	Michigan	D	North Carolina	D	Utah	C
Alaska	B	Idaho	D	Minnesota	B	North Dakota	B	Vermont	C
Arizona	D	Illinois	D	Mississippi	F	Ohio	D	Virginia	B
Arkansas	D	Indiana	D	Missouri	D	Oklahoma	D	Washington	C
California	F	Iowa	B	Montana	F	Oregon	D	West Virginia	C
Colorado	C	Kansas	C	Nebraska	C	Pennsylvania	D	Wisconsin	C
Connecticut	B	Kentucky	D	Nevada	D	Rhode Island	C	Wyoming	C
Delaware	D	Louisiana	D	New Hampshire	B	South Carolina	D		
DC	C	Maine	D	New Jersey	C	South Dakota	D		
Florida	D	Maryland	B	New Mexico	D	Tennessee	D		
Georgia	F	Massachusetts	B	New York	D	Texas	F		

[27]Mickelson, R.A., Bottia, M., & Southworth, S. (2008). School choice and segregation by race, class, and achievement. Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center. Retrieved from http://nepc.colorado.edu/files/CHOICE-08-Mickelson-FINAL-EG043008.pdf

[28]Frankenberg, E., Siegel-Hawlet, G., & Wang, J. (2011). Choice without equity: Charter school segregation. Education Policy Analysis Archives, 19(1). http://epaa.asu.edu/ojs/article/view/779%2018%20Nov.%202015 doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.14507/epaa.v19n1.2011

[29]Rothstein, R. (2014). The racial achievement gap, segregated schools, and segregated neighborhoods: A constitutional insult. Race and Social Problems, 6(4). Retrieved from http://www.epi.org/publication/the-racial-achievement-gap-segregated-schools-and-segregated-neighborhoods-a-constitutional-insult/

[30]Orfield, G. et. al. (2012). E Pluribus Separation: Deepening double segregation for more students. The Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles. Retrieved from http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/mlk-national/e-pluribus...separation-deepening-double-segregation-for-more-students/orfield_epluribus_revised_omplete_2012.pdf

state grades by category

State	No High Stakes Testing	Professionalization of Teaching	Resistance to Privatization	School Finance	Spend Taxpayer Resources Wisely	Chance for Success
Alabama	A	D	A	F	D	F
Alaska	C	C	D	B	C	B
Arizona	C	F	F	F	D	D
Arkansas	D	D	D	D	D	D
California	B	C	F	D	C	F
Colorado	C	F	F	D	D	C
Connecticut	B	D	D	C	C	B
Delaware	C	D	D	C	C	D
DC	B	D	D		C	C
Florida	D	F	F	D	C	D
Georgia	C	D	F	D	D	F
Hawaii	C	D	D	D	C	B
Idaho	D	D	D	F	F	D
Illinois	B	C	C	D	C	D
Indiana	D	F	F	B	F	D
Iowa	B	B	C	C	C	B
Kansas	B	D	C	C	D	C
Kentucky	C	D	A	D	C	D
Louisiana	D	D	F	C	C	D
Maine	C	C	C	C	D	D
Maryland	D	C	C	C	C	B
Massachusetts	C	D	C	B	C	B
Michigan	C	C	D	C	D	D
Minnesota	B	D	F	C	D	B
Mississippi	F	D	F	D	D	F
Missouri	C	D	C	D	D	D
Montana	A	C	A	D	B	F
Nebraska	A	C	A	C	D	C
Nevada	C	C	D	F	F	D
New Hampshire	A	D	C	C	D	B
New Jersey	C	C	D	A	C	C
New Mexico	D	D	D	D	D	D
New York	D	B	D	B	C	D
North Carolina	C	F	F	D	D	D
North Dakota	B	C	A	F	D	B
Ohio	D	C	F	B	D	D
Oklahoma	D	D	D	D	D	Chance
Oregon	C	D	C	D	D	D
Pennsylvania	C	C	D	C	D	D
Rhode Island	B	C	D	C	D	C
South Carolina	B	D	D	C	C	D
South Dakota	B	C	A	D	C	D
Tennessee	C	D	F	D	D	D
Texas	C	F	F	D	D	F
Utah	B	D	D	D	D	C
Vermont	A	C	B	C	C	C
Virginia	D	D	D	D	D	B
Washington	C	D	C	D	F	C
West Virginia	B	D	A	C	C	C
Wisconsin	C	C	C	C	D	C
Wyoming	B	C	D	C	D	C

States received grades based on the extent to which they attached high stakes to standardized testing. Grades were based on stakes attached to the following three factors:

1. **High school exit exams**
2. **Teacher evaluations linked to student test scores**
3. **Retention of students based on standardized test scores**

1. High School Exit Exams

Information on each state's policies regarding their requirements for high school exams was collected from the 2014 report produced by Texans Advocating for Meaningful Student Assessment (TAMSA) entitled, *Exit Exams State Comparisons*[1], which provides the number of exams a state requires students to pass to be eligible to graduate, and the existence of an alternate route to diplomas or appeals processes. States with no exit exams received a grade of "A"; states with one exam and a non-exam alternative open to all students received "B"; states with 1 exam received "C"; states with 2 exams received a D and states with 3 or more graduation exams received "F".

2. Teacher Evaluation Based on Student Test Scores

Data collected to grade states on their use of students' test or growth scores in teacher evaluations consisted of qualitative descriptions of each state's policies reflected in the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) report entitled *State of the States 2015: Evaluating Teaching, Leading and Learning*[2]. States that do not use student test scores received "A" and

states that required 45% or more of the teacher evaluation to reflect students standardized test scores, or that required an expected growth target to be met for an "effective" rating, earned "F." Grades were assigned based on the following scale (values reflect the percentage of student tests scores in teacher evaluations and/or polices): A = 0, B = less than 20; or no specific percentage and without policy qualifiers, C = 20 to 29, or no specific percentage but with policy qualifiers such as "scores should be used as a significant or substantial factor," D = 30 to 45, and F = greater than 45. The results ranged from A to F.

3. Retention of Students Based on Standardized Test Scores

Data were compiled to reflect the extent to which states require the retention of students based on standardized test scores in any grade[3] as of 2011-12, using data from the Education Commission of the States description of retention policies based on reading test scores, and updated with information available in 2015. States that require retention received a score 0; states that require retention but provide exemptions (e.g., promotion allowed with teacher or principal recommendation) received a score of 1; states that recommend retention based on standardized test scores received a score of 2; states that allow retention based on standardized test scores, or are silent regarding their use for this purpose received a score of 3; and states that explicitly forbid the use of standardized test scores for retention received a score of 4. Grades were assigned based on the following scale: A = 4, B = 3, C = 2, D = 1, F = 0. The results ranged from B to F.

[1]TAMSA. (2014. Exit exam state comparisons. (data base) Retrieved from http://www.tamsatx.org/uploads/3/1/6/2/3162377/exit_exam_state_comparison_2014-15_update-3.pdf

[2]Doherty, K. M., & Jacobs, S. (2015). State of the States: Evaluating teaching, leading and learning. Washington, D.C.: National Council on Teacher Quality. Retrieved from http://www.nctq.org/dmsView/StateofStates2015

[3]Rose, S., & Schimke, K. (2012, March 29). Third grade reading policies: Identification, intervention, retention. Retrieved from http://www.ecs.org/third-grade-literacy-policies-identification-intervention-retention/ It is possible that retention policies have changed, however, this was the most comprehensive source we could find. We updated based on any changes known to us at time of publication.

The following nine factors were used to determine each state's assigned grade for supporting the professionalization of teaching:

1. **Experienced teachers**
2. **Teacher pay early-career**
3. **Teacher pay mid-career**
4. **Teacher performance pay**
5. **Proportion of teachers certified through professional university programs**
6. **Teacher attrition rate**
7. **Teacher future plans**
8. **Teacher tenure**
9. **Requirements for teacher certification**

1. Experienced Teachers

Data were compiled from the 2013 National Center for Education Statistics *Digest of Education Statistics*[4] to reflect the percentage of teachers with less than 3 years of teaching experience for each state. The rationale for focusing on this group was that states with higher percentages of new teachers likely reflect greater turnover rates than states with lower percentages of new teachers. Statistical software (SPSS) was used to divide data into quintiles that were used to determine grades. The highest grades were assigned to the states in the lowest quintiles (i.e., states that had the lowest number of teachers with less than 3 years of full-time teaching experience). Grades of "A" were reserved for the states in the lowest quintile, having proportions that were less than 6.1%. The scores in the highest two quintiles received a grade of "F." Grades were assigned based on the following scale (values reflect percentages): A = less than 6.10, B = 6.10 to 7.30, C = 7.40 to 8.80, D = 8.90 to 10.02, and F = greater than10.02. The results ranged from 5.3% to 16.4%.

2. & 3.Teacher Pay: Early and Mid-career

Grades were based on the data provided by Bruce Baker, David Sciarra, and Danielle Farrie in their 2015 report regarding school funding entitled: *Is School Funding Fair? A National Report Card: Fourth Edition*[5]. The variable in the report, "wage competitiveness," compares the salaries of teachers in the same labor market to those of like age, degree status and who work similar hours. Two points in time were examined — age 25 (early career) and age 45 (mid-career).[6] Data were divided into quintiles using statistical software (SPSS). Grades of "A" were awarded to the states in the highest quintile — meaning that teacher and non-teacher wages were comparable, or that teacher wages exceeded non-teacher wages for like workers; scores in the lowest two quintiles received a grade of "F." Grades for early-career salary competitiveness were assigned based on the following scale (values reflect percentages): A = greater than 99, B = 85 to 99, C = 83 to 84, D = 80 to 82, and F = less than 80. Grades for mid-career salary competitiveness were assigned on the following scales (values reflect percentages): A = greater than 90, B = 74 to 89, C = 72 to 73, D = 68 to 71, and F = less than 68.

The results ranged from 7% to 121% for early-career, and 60% to 94% for mid-career.

4. Teacher Performance Pay

Data were obtained through the *U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics 2011-12 Schools and Staffing Survey*,[7] made available through National Center for Education Statistics website. Data for each state (Table 5. Percentage of public school districts that used pay incentives for various reasons, by state: 2011–12) reflected the percentage of public school districts that used pay incentives to selectively reward teachers. Statistical software (SPSS) was used to divide data into quintiles. The highest grades were assigned to states in the lowest quintiles (i.e., states that had the smallest proportion of school districts that used pay incentives to selectively reward teachers). Grades of "A" were reserved for those states that do not use performance pay; scores in the highest two quintiles received a grade of "F." Grades were assigned based on the following scale (values reflect percentage of districts that use performance pay in each state): A = 0, B = .10 to 2.00, C = 2.10 to 5.80, D = 5.81 to 10.90, and F = greater than 10.90. The results ranged from 0 to approximately 57%.

[4]U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. (2015). Digest of education statistics: 2013.Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/

[5]Baker, B. D., Sciarra, D. G., & Farrie, D. (2015). Is School Funding Fair? A National Report Card, 4th edition. Retrieved from http://www.schoolfunding-fairness.org/National_Report_Card_2015.pdf

[6]Ibid.

[7]U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. *Schools and staffing survey: 2011-12.* Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/tables/sass1112_2013311_d1s_005.asp

5. Proportion of Teachers Certified through Professional University Programs

Data were obtained from the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics *2011-12 Schools and Staffing Survey* made available through National Center for Education Statistics website. The percentages of teachers certified through traditional and alternative paths were obtained from the 2011-12 teacher survey.[8] States with the highest grades had the lowest proportion of alternatively certified teachers. Statistical software (SPSS) was used to divide data into quintiles that were used to determine grades. Grades of "A" were awarded to states with the lowest percentages in the lowest quintile; scores in the highest two quintiles received a grade of "F." Grades were assigned based on the following scale (values reflect percentages of alternatively certified teachers): A = less than 3.10, B = 3.10 to 5.05, C = 5.06 to 8.31, D = 8.32 to 13.35, F = greater than 13.35. The results ranged from 66% to 98%.

6. Teacher Attrition Rate

Data were obtained from restricted data made available by the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics *2012-13 Schools and Staffing Survey: Teacher Follow-Up Survey*,[9] which included a subset of teachers who participated in the previous school year's (2011-12) survey. The subset of 2011-12 teachers who were contacted indicated whether they were still teachers in the 2012-13 school year (stayers) or whether they had left the profession (leavers). Thus, the Teacher Follow-Up Survey included the responses of those stayers and leavers out of the total samples of contacted participants. Percentages indicating attrition rate were created by dividing the number of former teachers by the total number of teachers who participated in the Teacher Follow-Up study. Statistical software (SPSS) was used to divide data into quintiles that were used to determine grades. States with the lowest percentages of former teachers earned the highest grades, whereas those with the highest percentages of former teachers earned the lowest grades. Grades of "A" were awarded to states that had the lowest attrition rates in the lowest quintile;

scores in the highest two quintiles received a grade of "F." Grades were assigned based on the following scale (values reflect percentages): A = less than 17, B = 18 to 21, C = 22 to 24, D = 25 to 27, and F = greater than 27. The results ranged from 14% to 46%.

7. Teacher Future Plans

Data were compiled from the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics *2011-12 Schools and Staffing Survey*,[10] which asked teachers to report the extent to which they planned to remain in the teaching profession. The data were collected during the 2011-12 school year. The scale included choices such as, "as long as I am able," "until I am eligible for retirement," and "until a specific life event occurs." For the purposes of scoring, these two choices were combined: "definitely plan to leave as soon as I can," and "until a more desirable job opportunity comes along", to reflect the extent to which teachers plan to leave the teaching profession based on dissatisfaction. The choices reflected the proportion of teachers who agreed with the above statements reflecting dissatisfaction (they were instructed to select one of the items). Statistical software (SPSS) was used to divide data into quintiles. Grades of "A" were awarded the states with the lowest levels of teacher dissatisfaction in the lowest quintile; scores in the highest two quintiles received a grade of "F." Grades were assigned based on the following scale (values reflect percentages): A = less than 3.10, B = 3.10 to 4.16, C = 4.17 to 5.28, D = 5.29 to 6.79, and F = greater than 6.79. The results ranged from approximately 1.60 % to 12%.

8. Teacher Tenure

Data were compiled using the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics *2011-12 Schools and Staffing Survey*,[11] made available through National Center for Education Statistics website. Data for each state reflected the percentage of teachers who did not have tenure. Statistical software (SPSS) was used to divide data into quintiles. Grades of "A" were awarded to the states with the lowest percentages of untenured teachers in the lowest quintile; scores in the

[8]U.S. Department of Education. (2015). National Center for Education Statistics. *Powerstats*. Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/datalab/powerstats/

[9]U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. *Schools and staffing survey: 2011-2012*. Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/dataproducts.asp. The data on this site is restricted.

[10]U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. *Schools and staffing survey: 2011-2012*. Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/dataproducts.asp. The data on this site is restricted.

[11]U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. *Schools and staffing survey: 2011-2012*. Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/dataproducts.asp. The data on this site is restricted.

highest two quintiles received a grade of "F". Grades were assigned based on the following scale (numbers reflect percentages): A = less than 10.10, B = 10.10 to 16.94, C = 16.95 to 21.68, D = 21.69 to 25.59, and F = greater than 25.60. The results ranged from 0 to 60%.

9. Requirements for Teacher Certification

Data were obtained for four components that indicate state requirements for university-based teacher certification: a) education requirements for certification, b) experience requirements for certification, c) state-funded mentoring program, and d) standards for mentoring programs. Data sources are all from the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics 2011-12 State Education Reforms[12] unless otherwise noted. The tables used are noted as well.

a) Education Requirements for Certification

Information on whether state requirements for traditional, university-based teacher certification reflected formal, explicit coursework in area of certification was compiled. Table 3.2 summarized the data source and stated a "yes" response meant "to earn an initial license, prospective teachers must have taken substantial formal coursework in subject area(s) taught, corresponding to a major or equivalent." States were assigned 0 points if no substantial coursework in area of certification was required and 1 point if substantial coursework was required. Substantial work was defined as teacher licensure programs going beyond the formal requirements for earning a teaching license.

b) Experience Requirements Information

The experience requirements (i.e. practicum and student teaching) for traditional university-based teacher certification in each state and the District of Columbia were retrieved from the 2011-12 National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) Table 3.2; however, there were cases where data were not available. In those cases, information was collected via telephone calls made to the state licensure department and/or state department of education websites. Some data sources reflected units of experience as semester hours and others reflected student teaching hours. To convert all coefficients to the same metric (student teaching hours), semester units were converted into weeks using definitions provided by the 2008 International Affairs Office, U.S. Department of Education. Most U.S. higher

education institutions operate on an academic year divided into two equal 15 to 16 week-long semesters. One practice credit hour (supervised clinical rounds, visual or performing art studio, supervised student teaching, field work, etc.) represents three to four hours per week of supervised and /or independent practice. This in turn represents between 45 and 60 hours of work per semester. Practice credits in three-hour blocks equate to a studio or practice course, representing between 135 and 180 total hours of academic work per semester.

To convert all data into weeks, in cases where states listed hours per week (e.g., Utah), the total hours were divided by 35 hours; in cases where states listed number of days (e.g., Delaware), the total number of days was divided by 5. The various configurations resulted in variation across states between 0 to 20 weeks of student teaching. States were ranked by weeks of student teaching; the mean and standard deviation were calculated; weeks were converted to z-scores to place them on a scale from 0 to 1 (e.g. a score of 15 weeks was normalized to a score of 0.75).

c) State-funded Mentoring Program

Information reflecting the state requirement for new teachers to participate in a state-funded mentoring or induction program was compiled using Table 3.7. States with no program in place received a score of 0; states with a program in place received a score of 1.

d) Standards for Mentoring

Information reflecting whether there are standards in place for selecting, training, and/or matching new teachers with mentors for each states was compiled. States with no standards in place received a score of 0; states with standards received a score of 1. Data were obtained from Table 3.7.

Using the data collected from the four categories, a weighted sum (sum of each category multiplied by a weight) was used to calculate the final grade for each state. A weight of 1 was used for experience requirements and a weight of .5 was given to all other categories, reflecting higher importance on experience requirements in the weighted sum. The maximum score possible was a 2.5. Grades were assigned based on the following scale (values reflect the weighted sum): A = 2.50, B = 1.88 to 2.49, C =1.25 to 1.87, D = 0.63 to 1.24, and F = less than 0.63. The results ranged from .5 to 2.5.

[12]U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences. (2015). *State education reforms (SER): Staff qualifications and development.* Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/statereform/sqd.asp

The following four factors were used to determine each state's grade for resisting the privatization of their public schools:

1. **Support for local public schools**
2. **Charter facilities funding and financing**
3. **Charter school expansion rate**
4. **Parent trigger laws**

1. Support for Local Public Schools

State laws and policies that may positively influence or undermine support for democratically governed, community schools were rated. The components were: a) laws to allow students to enroll in schools other than those to which they are assigned, either within or across districts; b) laws that support the public funding of charters schools but do not subject them to the same regulations, mandates and oversight as traditional public schools; c) laws that support vouchers, which divert public funds away from public schools and give parents the discretion to use those funds for their children's private and parochial school tuition; d) tax credit/tax deduction laws that allow taxpayers to claim tax credits with their contributions to schools, including private and public schools and e) the existence of ESAs (Education Savings Accounts), which allow public funding to be used for an educational program that the parent chooses outside of the public school system. Data were retrieved from the Education Commission of the States database[13] that reflected responses from the 2013 Open Enrollment Survey. The descriptions of policies and/or laws for each of the first four categories were reviewed by two raters (i.e., a designated coding pair).

The rubric for open enrollment policies[14] (policies that mandate open enrollment received the lowest scores) was: no policy = 1; one voluntary policy = .75; one mandatory policy or multiple voluntary policy = .50; a combination of mandatory and voluntary policies = .25; and multiple mandatory policies = 0. The rubric for open enrollment was placed on a 0 to 1 scale to be consistent with the rubric used to code charter school, publicly funded voucher, and tax credit/tax deduction laws, which was: no law = 1; law = 0. Accordingly, each category is equally reflected in the overall grade.

After establishing the rubric, each rater individually coded the laws using the scoring rubric and then reviewed the other rater's work to determine whether there were any discrepancies in the coding decisions. In the event of a disagreement, the coding pair discussed the issue until a consensus was reached (meaning both raters agreed with the coding).

The most recent (2015) information reflecting the existence of Education Savings Accounts (also known as Education Scholarship Accounts and ESAs)[15] was obtained from the 2015 Civitas Institute. ESAs are funded directly by a state's K-12 budget. Parents can use funds allocated for their child at their public school for an educational program of their choice, including home schooling. If a state has an ESA, it received 0 points. If it does not, it received 1 point.

After aggregating points across all five categories, the maximum number of points that a state could earn was 5, reflecting the absence of any laws that negatively impact funding and/or support for neighborhood schools (i.e., the maximum score for each of the aforementioned categories); the lowest score a state could earn was 0. Grades were assigned on the following scale: A = 5; B = 4; C = 3; D = 2; and F = 1. The results ranged from .25 to 5.0.

2. Charter Facilities Funding and Financing

The rubric consisted of a five-point scale ranging from "A" to "F". States that earned an "A" grade provide no funding for charter facilities. States that earned an "F" provide charter facilities free of charge or reimbursed the charter schools for some of the costs incurred or provide (or make available) funding for charter schools on a per-pupil basis. Grades were assigned based on the following scale: A= no funding for charter facilities; B = no funding but the state supplied a list of available spaces that a charter could pursue independently; C = no direct monetary assistance to charter schools, but charters may rent or lease state facilities below market value and/or use public buildings with certain limitations; D = financing or funding options available for charters; F = charter facilities may operate free of charge and/or are reimbursed some of the costs incurred and/or provide (or make available) funding for charter schools on a per-pupil basis.

[13]Education Commission of the States. (2013) *State Profiles School Choice Database* http://ecs.force.com/mbdata/mbChoicemap

Voucher data was updated from National Conference of State Legislatures. (2015). *School Voucher Laws: State by State Comparison*. http://www.ncsl.org/research/education/voucher-law-comparison.aspx

[14]Open enrollment policies often result in increased segregation of students by race, language, ethnicity and special needs. The clustering of high needs students in the home school, often results in schools that do not have the resources to attend to those needs, resulting in drops in scores and school closures. See, Bennett, J. (2011). Programmed to Fail: The Parthenon Report and Closing Schools.

[15]Luebke, B. (2015). NC voters Support ed savings accounts. Civitas Institute. https://www.nccivitas.org/2015/nc-voters-support-ed-savings-accounts/

Also see, Friedman Foundation. (2015) Explaining Tennessee's ESA Bill. Retrieved from http://www.edchoice.org/explaining-tennessees-esa-bill

Data were retrieved from the *Education Commission of the States Charter School Update*,[16] which included information for each State and the District of Columbia. Data consisted of descriptions of each state's policy for funding charter school facilities. The state policies were compiled and then reviewed by two raters (i.e., a designated coding pair), for the assignment of grades. In the event of a disagreement, the coding pair discussed the issue until a consensus was reached.

3. Controls on Charter School Growth

Data were obtained from the National Alliance of Public Charter Schools' 2015 report[17], *Measuring Up*, which classified states based on the limitations they placed on charter school growth. States were rated in that report on a scale of 3-12 in increments of three points (3, 6, 9, 12) with the lowest score (3) assigned to states with the most restrictive growth laws, and the highest (12) assigned to states with no caps on charter growths. States without charters were not listed.

We used the Alliance's rating system to assign the following grades: A = states without charters; B = states with the strongest restrictions (earned 3 points from the Alliance); C = states with fewer restrictions (earned 6 points from Alliance); D = states with very limited restrictions (earned 9 points from the Alliance); F = and states that had no cap on charter school growth.

4. Parent Trigger

Data were retrieved from the National Conference of State Legislators' (2013) report[18] entitled *Parent Trigger Laws in the States*, which included information for the seven states that passed parent trigger laws. "Parent trigger" laws allow parents to petition for changes at their children's low-performing schools and if more than half the parents agree, then the school district must comply. Such laws give parents the authority, by a majority vote, to take control of a community financed and owned facility and give it to a private entity. States with trigger laws are denoted with a "Yes," and states without trigger laws are denoted with a "No." States with a trigger law had the overall grade for this category, Resistance to Privatization, reduced by one letter grade (e.g. from a "B" to a "C").

[16]Education Commission of the States. (2014) Charter Schools: Online Database. Retrieved from http://www.ecs.org/html/educationIssues/CharterSchools/CHDB_intro.asp

[17]National Alliance of Public Charter Schools. (2015). Measuring Up. Washington, D. C. http://www.publiccharters.org/law-database/caps/

[18]Cunningham, J. (2015, October 15) Parent trigger laws in the states. National Conference of State Legislatures. Retrieved from http://www.ncsl.org/research/education/state-parent-trigger-laws.aspx

The following three factors were used to determine each state's grade for equitable and adequate school financing:

1. **Adjusted per-pupil expenditure**
2. **Resources spent on education in relation to ability to pay**
3. **Equitable funding across each state**

1. Adjusted Per-pupil Expenditures

This variable utilizes the data provided by Bruce Baker, David Sciarra, and Danielle Farrie in their 2015 report regarding school funding entitled, *Is School Funding Fair? A National Report Card.* The variable in the report was called "funding level," which reflected "a model of school funding that predicts average funding levels while controlling for the following: student poverty, regional wage variation, school district size and density." The purpose of controlling for these variables was to get a more accurate comparison of state funding practices, which Baker and colleagues consider to be a fairer comparison of comparative, per pupil expenditures. Data were divided into quintiles using statistical software (SPSS) to determine grades for adjusted per-pupil expenditures. Grades of "A" were designated to the uppermost states in the highest quintile; scores in the lowest two quintiles received a grade of "F." Grades were assigned based on the following scale (values reflect dollar amounts): A = greater than 16,999, B = 13,400 to 16,999, C = 11,100 to 13,399, D = 9,500 to 11,099, and F = less than 9,500. The results ranged from $6,369 to $18,507.

2. Resources Spent on Education in Relation to Ability to Pay

This variable reflects the data of the Effort index, of the Baker et al school funding report card that takes into account each state's local and state spending on education in relation to the state's economic productivity, or gross state product. Combining these two elements into a ratio provides a sense of the level of priority state and local budgets assign to education.[19] Grades were assigned based on the following scale: A = greater than .049, B = .040 to .049, C = .035 to .039, D = .030 to.034, and F = less than .030. The results ranged from .023 to .051.

3. Equitable Funding Across State

This variable captured "whether a state's funding system recognizes the additional resources required for students in settings of concentrated student poverty."[20] States that allocated more funding for high-poverty districts than for low-poverty districts earned the highest grades. These states are in contrast to those that earned the lowest grades because they gave less funding to districts in high-poverty areas. This report card used the letter grades assigned by Baker and his research team in the aforementioned report. For more detailed methodology, please see the Baker report.[21]

[19]Baker, B. D., Sciarra, D. G., & Farrie, D. (2015). *Is School Funding Fair? A National Report Card*: Fourth ed. Retrieved from http://www.schoolfundingfairness.org/National_Report_Card_2015.pdf

[20]See page 8 of Baker, B. D., Sciarra, D. G., & Farrie, D. (2015). *Is School Funding Fair? A National Report Card*: Fourth ed. Retrieved from http://www.schoolfundingfairness.org/National_Report_Card_2015.pdf

[21]Ibid.

The following five factors were used to determine each state's grade for whether it was using its resources wisely:

1. **Class size state average**
2. **Class size variations across the state**
3. **Preschool enrollment**
4. **Full-day kindergarten enrollment**
5. **Virtual school enrollment**

1. Average Class Size

Data from the 2011-12 school year were obtained from Table 209.30 of the *2013 Digest of Education Statistics*,[22] from the National Center for Education Statistics website. Average class sizes, by state, were presented separately for elementary and secondary school teachers. In order to determine a single grade for class size rather than two (one for elementary and one for secondary), data (units were average number of students) for elementary school classrooms and secondary school classrooms were ranked separately; the mean and standard deviation for each were calculated; and average number of students were converted to z-scores for each. The z-scores for each of the categories were averaged. Statistical software (SPSS) was used to divide data into quintiles that were used to determine grades. The highest grades were assigned to states in the lowest quintiles (i.e., states that had the lowest average class sizes). Grades of "A" were designated to the lowermost states in the lowest quintile; scores in the highest two quintiles received a grade of "F." Grades were assigned based on the following scale (values reflect z-scores): A = less than -1.5, B = -1.5 to -.8, C = -0.7 to -0.3, D = -0.2 to 0.2, and F = greater than 0.2. The results ranged from -1.65 to 2.17.

2. Class Size Variation Across the State

The class size variation across the state had three components: a) overall class size variation, b) elementary class size variation, and c) secondary class size variation. Data for class size variation were obtained through the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics *Schools and Staffing Survey*,[23] which was administered to teachers during the 2011-12 school year. The survey included an average class size variable that could be disaggregated by school level, classroom type, and urbanicity. Accordingly, average class sizes for teachers in self-contained elementary school classrooms and

departmentalized secondary school classrooms were compiled; the two groups were then disaggregated by urbanicity, specifically focusing on urban and suburban locations.

 a) Overall Class Size Variation

The gap in class size between urban and suburban schools was calculated; the resulting values were divided into quintiles using statistical software (SPSS) to determine grades ranging from "A" to "F." States that had the lowest differences in class size between urban and suburban schools received the highest grades, whereas those with the greatest gaps received the lowest grades. Grades of "A" were designated to the lowermost states in the lowest quintile; scores in the highest two quintiles received a grade of "F." In order to reflect an overall grade reflecting both elementary and secondary, variation for elementary and secondary was averaged and divided into quintiles (see how both levels were scored below in sections b and c). Grades of "A" were designated to the lowermost states in the lowest quintile; scores in the highest two quintiles received a grade of "F." Grades for the combined variation in class size for elementary and secondary were assigned based on the following scale: A = less than .71, B = .71 to 1.44, C = 1.45 to 2.73, D = 2.74 to 3.75, and F = greater than 3.75. The results ranged from 0.63 to 7.64.

b) Elementary Class Size Variation

Grades of "A" were designated to the lowermost states in the lowest quintile; scores in the highest two quintiles received a grade of "F." Grades for elementary school were assigned based on the following scale (grades reflect differences in class size between urban and suburban schools): A = less that 0.30, B = .30 to .86, C = .87 to 1.82, D = 1.83 to 2.68, and F = greater than 2.68. The results ranged from 0.23 to 6.00.

c) Secondary Class Size Variation

Grades of "A" were designated to the lowermost states in the lowest quintile; scores in the highest two quintiles received a grade of "F." Grades for secondary school were assigned based on the following scale (grades reflect differences in class size between urban and suburban schools): A = less than 0.21, B = 0.21 to 1.35, C = 1.36 to 2.31, D = 2.32 to 4.42, and F = greater than 4.43. The results ranged from 0.11 to 12.73.

[22] U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. (2015). *Digest of education statistics: 2013*. http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_209.30.asp

[23] U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. *Schools and staffing survey: 2011-2012*. http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/data-products.asp (Restricted data).

3. Preschool Enrollment

The percentage of three-year-olds and four-year-olds enrolled in publicly funded preschool programs for each state were obtained from Table 2 of the 2014 National Institute for Early Education Research.[24] Statistical software (SPSS) was used to divide data into quintiles that were used to determine grades. The highest grades were assigned to states in the highest quintile (i.e., states with the greatest percentages of students enrolled in publicly funded preschool earned the highest grades). Grades of "A" were designated to the uppermost states in the highest quintile; scores in the lowest two quintiles received a grade of "F." Grades were assigned as follows (values reflect percentages): A = 58.7 and higher; B = 24.3 to 58.6; C = 13.7 to 24.2; D = F = 7.6 and lower. Percentages ranged from approximately 0% to 83%.

4. Full Day Kindergarten Enrollment

Data were obtained through the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education 2012-13 Common Core of Data Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey. Specifically, the number of students enrolled in publicly funded full-day kindergarten and the total number of students enrolled in publicly funded schools were obtained from the table generator.[25] Percentages were calculated by taking the total number of students enrolled in publicly funded full-day kindergarten divided by the total number of students enrolled in publicly funded schools. The resultant fractional percentages served as an indicator of the relative proportion of a state's kindergarten-aged students who were enrolled in full-day programs. Statistical software (SPSS) was used to divide data into quintiles that were used to determine grades. The highest grades were assigned to states in the highest quintile (i.e., states with the greatest percentages of students enrolled in full-day kindergarten earned the highest grades). Grades of "A" were designated to the uppermost states in the highest quintile; scores in the lowest two quintiles received a grade of "F." Grades were assigned based on the following scale (values reflect percentages): A = greater than.089, B = .082 to .089, C = .079 to .081, D = .077 to .078, and F = less than. 077. The results ranged from .063% to .095%.

5. Virtual School Enrollment

Data reflecting the proportion of students enrolled in online schools were retrieved from the *Keeping Pace With K-12 Digital Learning website*[26] that was last updated in 2014. Statistical software (SPSS) was used to divide data into quintiles that were used to determine grades. The highest grades were assigned to states in the lowest quintile (i.e., states that had the lowest proportion of students enrolled in fully-online schools). Grades of "A" were designated to states with 0% of student enrolled in online schools; scores in the highest two quintiles received a grade of "F." Grades were assigned based on the following scale (values reflect percentages): A = 0, B = .01 to .06, C = .07 to .29, D = .30 to .83, and F = greater than .84. The results ranged from 0 to 4.48%.

[24]The National Institute for Early Education Research. (2015). *The state of preschool 2014*. Retrieved from http://nieer.org/sites/nieer/files/Yearbook2014_full2_0.pdf

[25]U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. *ElSi table generator* [data file]. https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/elsi/tableGenerator.aspx

[26]Keeping Pace with K-12 Digital Learning. (2014). *Data and information* [data file]. www.kpk12.com/states/

The following three factors related to school success were used to determine each state's grade for a student's chance for success:

1. **Proportion of children from low-income households**
2. **Proportion of children from low-income households with at least one parent employed full-time**
3. **Proportion of black and Latino students attending intensely segregated schools.**

1. Proportion of Children from Low-income Households

Data on the percentage of children living in low-income homes[27] in each state were obtained from the National Center for Children in Poverty 50-states demographics wizard,[28] which reflects data from the *2013 American Community Survey*. Statistical software (SPSS) was used to divide data into quintiles that were used to determine grades. The highest grades were assigned to states in the lowest quintile (i.e., states that had the lowest proportion of children in low-income homes). Grades of "A" were designated to the lowermost states in the lowest quintile; scores in the highest two quintiles received a grade of "F." Grades were assigned based on the following scale (numbers reflect percentages): A = less than 31, B = 31 to 35, C = 36 to 38, D = 39 to 44, F = greater than 44. The results ranged from approximately 28% to 58%.

2. Proportion of Children from Low-income Households with at Least One Parent Employed Full-time

Data on the percentage of children living in low-income households,[29] despite having at least one parent employed full time, were obtained from the National Center for Children in Poverty 50-states demographics wizard,[30] which reflects data from the *2013 American Community Survey*. Statistical software (SPSS) was used to divide data into quintiles that were used to determine grades. The highest grades were assigned to states in the lowest quintile (i.e., states that had the lowest proportion of children with at least one parent employed full-time, but still low income homes). Grades of "A" were designated to the lowermost states in the lowest quintile; scores in the highest two quintiles received a grade of "F." Grades were assigned based on the following scale (values reflect percentages): A = less than 16, B = 16 to 22, C = 23 to 26, D = 27 to 30, and F = greater than 30. The results ranged from approximately 15% to 42%.

3. Segregated Schooling

Data reflect the proportion of black and Latino students attending intensely segregated schools (schools where over 90% of all students are non-white). Data was obtained from the 2014 Report by the UCLA Civil Right Project, entitled *Brown at 60: Great Progress, a Long Retreat and an Uncertain Future*[31] by Gary Orfield and colleagues. Grades of "A" were assigned to the states with the lowest proportions of black and Latino students attending intensely segregated schools; the states with the highest proportion received a grade of "F." Grades were assigned based on the following scale (values reflect percentage of students attending an intensely segregated school): A = less than 26 (black and Latino), B= less than 26 (black or Latino),[32] C = 26 to 40 (black or Latino), D = greater than 40 (black or Latino), and F = greater than 40 (black and Latino) .

Important note regarding our metrics: Our research team sought to use the most current data sources available regarding school policies, laws and practices. We updated the ratings based on any changes known to us as of January 2016. However, it is quite possible that the most recent changes could be missed due to the constant flux of education policy.

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[27]The center describes the low-income category as including poor (below 100% of Federal Poverty Threshold), and near poor (between 100% and 199% of the Federal Poverty Threshold).

[28]National Center for Children in Poverty. (2015) 50-state demographics wizard. [data file]. Retrieved from http://www.nccp.org/tools/demographics/

[29]The center describes the low-income category as including poor (below 100% of Federal Poverty Threshold), and near poor (between 100% and 199% of the Federal Poverty Threshold).

[30]National Center for Children in Poverty. 50-state demographics wizard. [data file] http://www.nccp.org/tools/demographics/

[31]Orfield, G., & Frankenberg, E. (2014). Brown at 60: Great progress, a long retreat and an uncertain future. The Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles. Retrieved from http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/brown-at-60-great-progress-a-long-retreat-and-an-uncertain-future/Brown-at-60-051814.pdf

[32]If one group was less than 25% and the other was greater than 40%, a grade of "C" was assigned.

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