



Fixing Our National Accountability System: Executive Summary: Fact Sheet *A report from the National Center on Education and the Economy*

This new report from NCEE argues that the current education accountability system is not only ineffective — but also harmful. Drawing from his research on the world's top performing education systems, NCEE President Marc Tucker details a strategy for replacing today's fractured system of test-based accountability with a higher-quality, streamlined approach to improving student, teacher and school performance nationwide.

Higher-Quality Tests, More Effective Uses of Data

The ideas outlined by Marc Tucker in *Fixing Our National Accountability System* signify a departure from conventional thinking on the issue of accountability. Rather than focus on punishing teachers for the results of a system that others designed, the core components of this report rest on three fundamental principles:

- 1) **Testing:** Instead of testing all of our students every year with low-quality tests, students would take high-quality accountability tests, covering a full core curriculum, only three times in their school career. In some off years, tests in math and ELA would be administered only to samples of students by computer and would not carry high stakes for teachers or students.
- 2) **Use of Data:** Data from these tests would be used to identify schools that might be in trouble, and to deploy a team of expert educators to assist in resolving the issues with the help of districts and/or states. This data would be available to the general public but it would not include a rank or grade.
- 3) **Policies for Professionals:** Enact policies that make it attractive for our nation's strongest teachers and principals to work in the most at-risk schools – these very same policies would also make teaching an attractive career for some of our best high school graduates and transform teaching into a high status profession.

Functional Accountability Systems that Respect Teachers as Professionals

Every year, roughly 8 percent of U.S. teachers leave the profession, compared to 4.8 percent in Hong Kong, and 3 percent in Singapore. This means only 52 percent of the teaching force from any given year in the United States is teaching six years later (NCES Teacher Follow-up Survey, Hong Kong Bureau of Education, Singapore Ministry of Education).

Fixing Our National Accountability System says the alternative to the kind of punitive accountability measures now dominating U.S. policy is not just a different accountability system — but a different kind of education system designed to turn teaching into a high-status profession:

1. **Develop career ladders for teachers, school leaders:** An essential component of education systems designed to attract and retain high-quality teachers. Each step comes with additional compensation, responsibility and autonomy.
2. **Offer compensation to attract top talent:** Compensation should be on track with those of other entry-level professionals.
3. **Change how teachers' time is spent:** At least 25 percent of time in school should be spent collaborating with other teachers on curriculum, instruction and planning.
4. **Develop peer-to-peer accountability systems:** Teachers who work together hold each other accountable.

We know this form of accountability will work because it is already working at a national scale in the [countries that are outperforming us](#).

Read the full report and other resources: www.ncee.org/accountability