



PRESS RELEASE

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NEW OREGON COALITION HOLDS PROMISE OF PROGRESS ON TEACHING QUALITY *Thought Leaders in Oregon Education Convene, Join National Commission on Teaching and America's Future*

The leading education policy organizations in Oregon, along with the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, announce a new initiative to foster high expertise in the ranks of teachers. The Coalition for Quality Teaching and Learning has convened to find consensus approaches to better support Oregon's teaching force.

The initiative is significant for two reasons. First, the Coalition includes Oregon's most influential education stakeholders, including the Chalkboard Project, Oregon Department of Education, the state superintendent of public instruction, the Oregon Education Association, the chancellor of the Oregon university system, Oregon colleges and universities, business and advocacy groups and other key education partners. "The goal that brings us together is supporting educators at all points in their careers," notes Susan Castillo, Superintendent of Schools. "Providing every teacher with high-quality professional development and growth opportunities is essential to supporting our students and raising academic achievement."

Second, the Coalition has resulted in an invitation to become a state partner with the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF), which provides national support on strategies, legislation, policies, promising practices, and state-level action plans on teaching quality and student achievement. "When the major voices in education policy

are all saying the same thing, and sitting at the table with a common goal, that's a cause for hope for real progress in Oregon education," says NCTAF President Tom Carroll.

The work of the Oregon Coalition is now being defined, and comes at a critical moment. Nearly 40% of new teachers are leaving the profession within five years of beginning. Explains Chalkboard president Sue Hildick, "Research shows that the best way to raise student achievement is to have an effective teacher in every classroom. That requires all of us to work together to provide support for great teaching from the pre-service stage all the way through a teacher's career. This is especially important now, given the ongoing retirement of so many baby boomer teachers, and the high attrition rate of new teachers."

Possible areas of focus for the Coalition are

1. recommending quality standards for professional development and professional practice, and
2. exploring initiatives to support teacher preparation, mentoring, professional development, performance evaluation, and career models.

Sums up Courtney Vanderstek of Oregon Education Association, "This is an important step in identifying the resources, tools and support Oregon teachers need to succeed in the classroom to help their students achieve. We hope as the partnership develops we can also provide the necessary investment in effective programs to support successful teachers."

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About Chalkboard Project

Chalkboard Project aims to help create a more informed and engaged public that understands and addresses the tough choices and tradeoffs required to build strong schools. Chalkboard also develops and funds programs for school districts that improve school quality, accountability, and funding. www.ChalkboardProject.org.

About NCTAF

The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) is a non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization based in Washington, DC. NCTAF is dedicated to providing every child with competent, caring, qualified teaching in schools organized for success. With a network of 27 partner states and links to professional educational organizations across the nation, NCTAF provides leadership on innovation and improvement in teaching and learning in America's schools. www.nctaf.org.