

# MAKING THE GRADE



EFFECTIVE TEACHING IN  
EVERY CLASSROOM

## Lawmakers Should Act on Teacher Evaluations that Allow Multiple Measures of Student Achievement

State lawmakers have a critical opportunity in the next few weeks to approve legislation that can improve teacher effectiveness and boost student achievement.

As part of budget negotiations, Gov. Tom Corbett has asked lawmakers to pass a measure to improve teacher evaluations and allow student performance to account for half of a teacher's evaluation. The governor understands that a key part of assessing a teacher's effectiveness is looking at the academic performance of the teacher's students.

Unfortunately, the proposal has been the subject of misinformation from some who falsely claim the student performance component would be gauged by a single test, such as a student's final exam. We hope lawmakers aren't fooled by such misleading claims.

The truth is, the teacher evaluation model being proposed for Pennsylvania uses **multiple** measures of student achievement to evaluate teachers and help them improve. Measures of student performance that could be factored into a teacher evaluation include a school's graduation and attendance rates, participation in advanced courses, the rate of growth in student achievement, student projects and portfolios, as well as other measures.

Student performance could even be measured by objectives teachers themselves help define. These "Student Learning Objectives" - academic goals that teachers and evaluators set for groups of students - would be specific and measurable, aligned to state academic standards and based on student growth or achievement - **not based on a single test**.

Our students, parents and taxpayers deserve a better way to evaluate teachers, and teachers deserve evaluations that rely on multiple measures of student achievement. The General Assembly can deliver both if it acts now on the governor's plan.

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*Making the Grade: Effective Teaching in Every Classroom* is Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children's project designed to create awareness about the importance of an effective teacher in every classroom and advance the public policies required to assure every child benefits from effective teaching every school day.

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