

BROOKINGS

QUALITY. INDEPENDENCE. IMPACT.

Access to Quality Teaching: Myths, Facts, and Potential Policy Solutions for the Future

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“From the moment students enter a school, the most important factor in their success is not the color of their skin or the income of their parents, it’s the person standing at the front of the classroom... America’s future depends on its teachers.”

President Barack Obama, Remarks to the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, March 10, 2009

Overview:

- a. Performance and accountability
- b. Three myths about teachers and schools
- c. Strategies for moving forward

International Comparisons:

- In TIMSS, U.S. fourth graders scored 541 in math, near the middle of second-tier countries on TIMSS (ranked 11 of 50 countries)
- Eighth graders scored 509 in math. Which is barely (but significantly) higher than the 500 international average
- Eighth graders scored 525 in science, significantly above the international average and significantly below students from eight other nations
- In PISA test, among the 34 OECD countries, the U.S. performed below average in mathematics in 2012 and is ranked 27th
- In reading and science the U.S. performed close to the OECD average. The U.S. ranks 17 in reading, and 20 in science

State Comparisons:

	2013 NAEP ranking (out of 51)	Adjusted ranking	Change in ranking	Spending per student
Arizona	41	40	1	\$7,667
Colorado	9	12	-3	\$8,893
Idaho	25	43	-18	\$6,916
Nevada	43	33	10	\$8,211
New Mexico	50	36	14	\$9,375
Utah	24	47	-23	\$6,580

Source: Chingos, M. (2015) *Breaking the curve. Promises and pitfalls of Using NAEP data to assess the state role in student achievement. Table A.1 and Common Core of Data (CCD) 2012-2013*

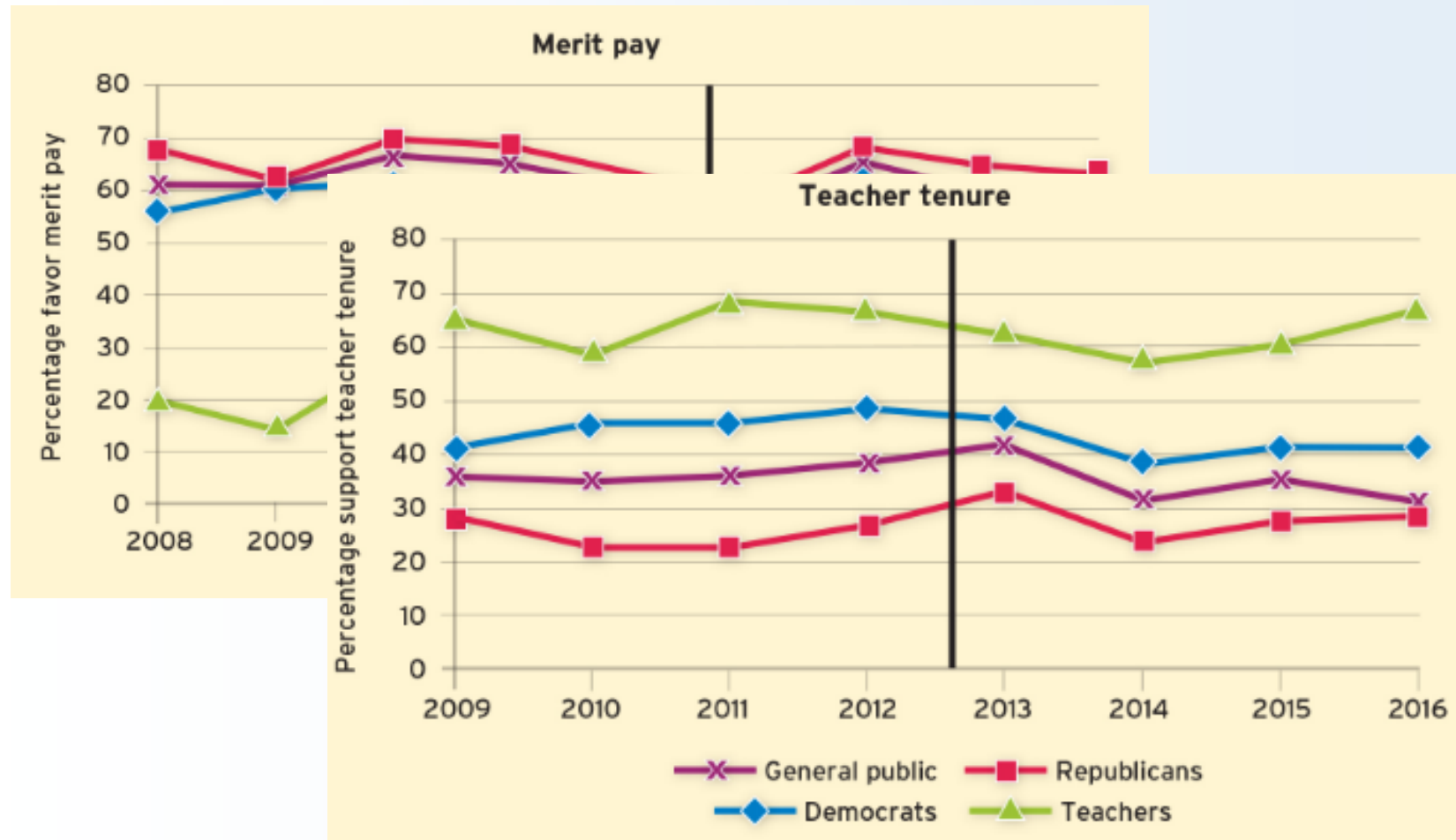
Increasing accountability

- a. NCLB's role
- b. Part of a general accountability push
- c. Consequence of greater data availability
- d. Accountability is here to stay

Accountability comes to teachers

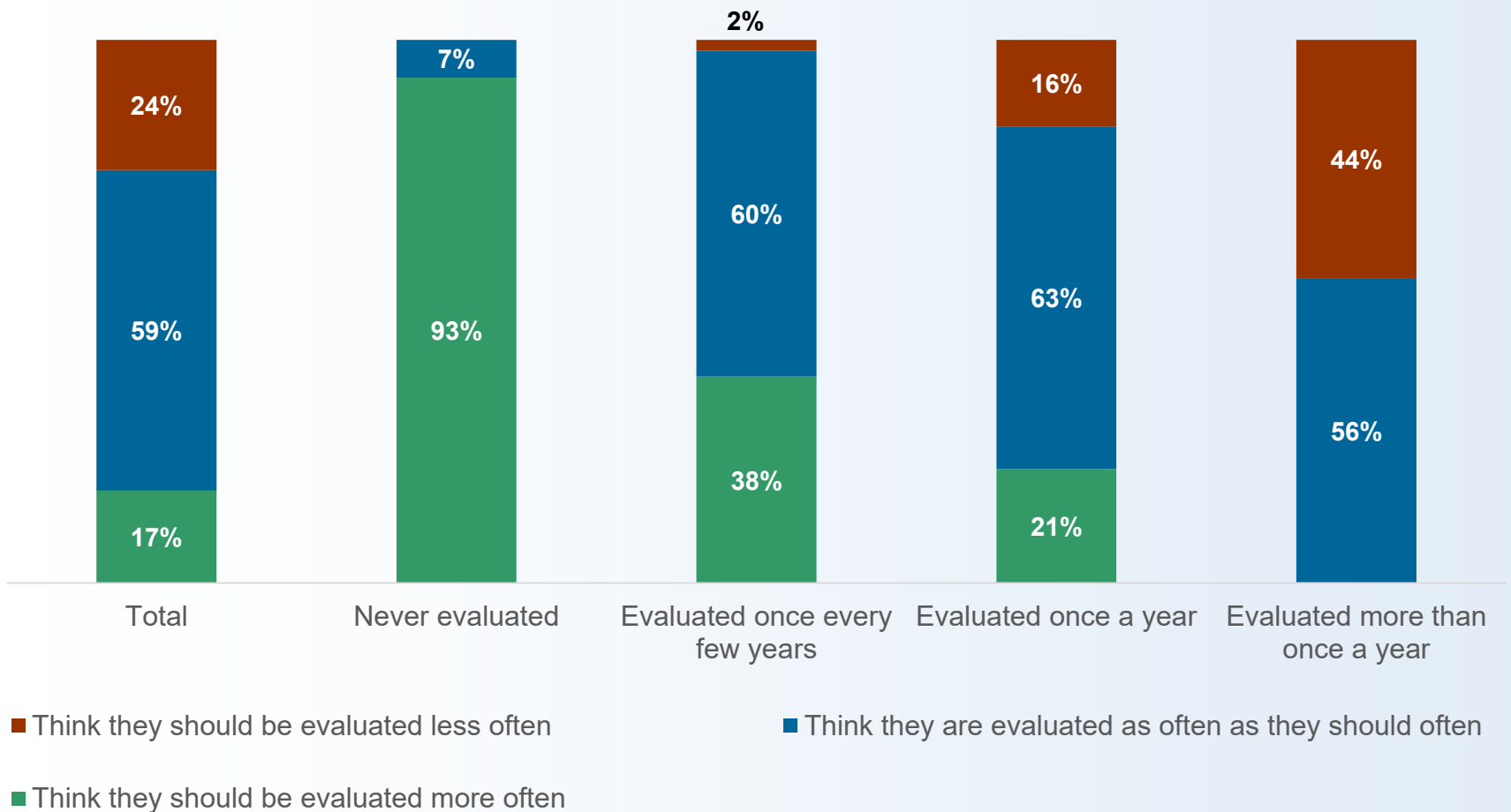
- a. Natural extension of school-based accountability
- b. Teachers matter a great deal to students
- c. Race to the Top, NCLB prompt flood of legislation on teacher evaluation

Public opinion on teachers' accountability



Source: Peterson, P., Henderson, M., West, M. and Barrows, S. (2016) Ten-year Trends in Public Opinion From the EdNext Poll. Retrieved from <http://educationnext.org/ten-year-trends-in-public-opinion-from-ednext-poll-2016-survey/>

Teachers' attitudes towards teacher evaluation



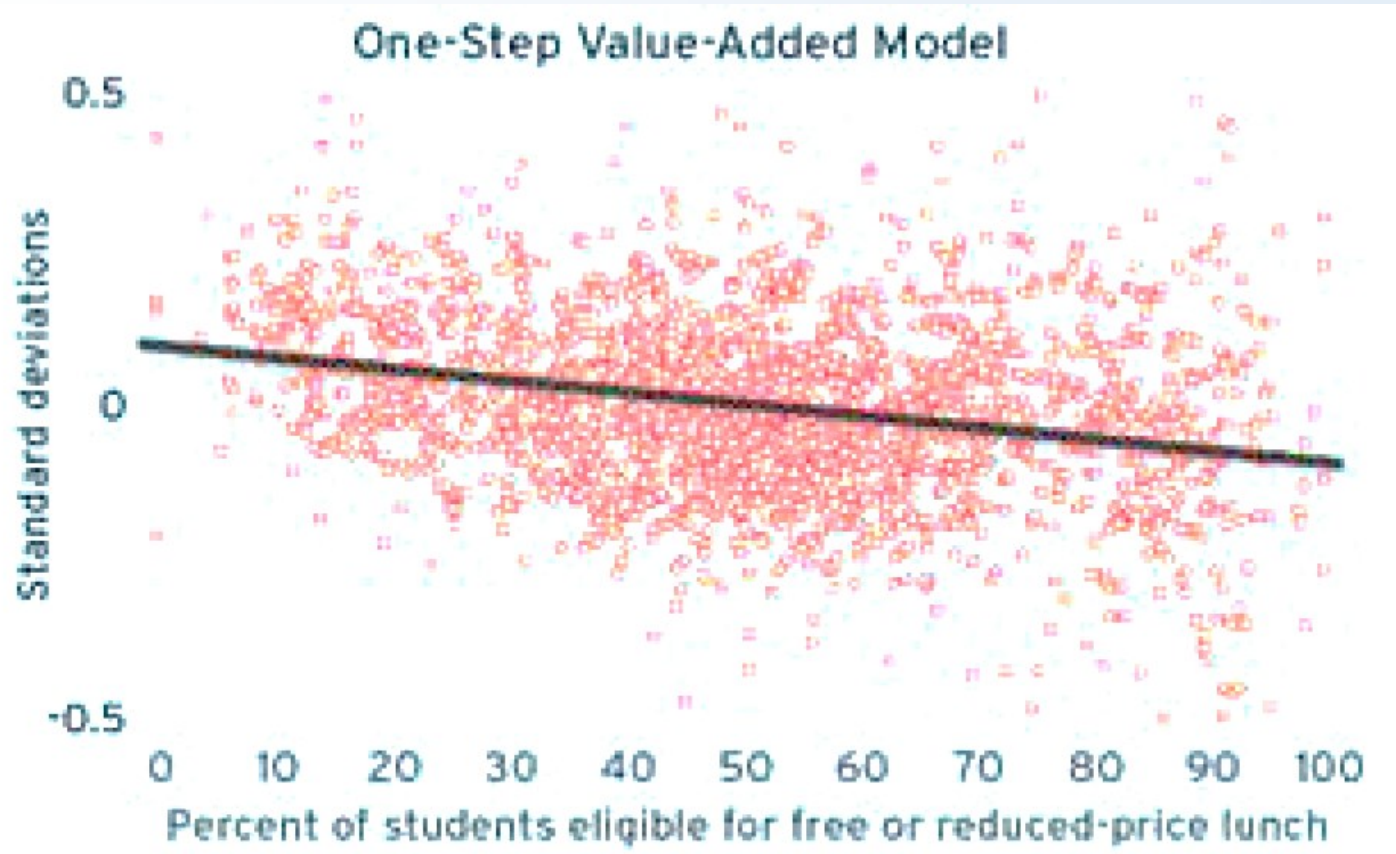
Three myths about teachers and schools

- a. The most affluent districts have the best schools
- b. We know what good teaching is and how to screen for the best teachers
- c. The most affluent schools have the best teachers

Myth 1: The most affluent districts have the best schools

- a. Proficiency measures versus progress on proficiency measures
- b. Misattribution problem
- c. Fact check: good schools exist in all types of neighborhoods

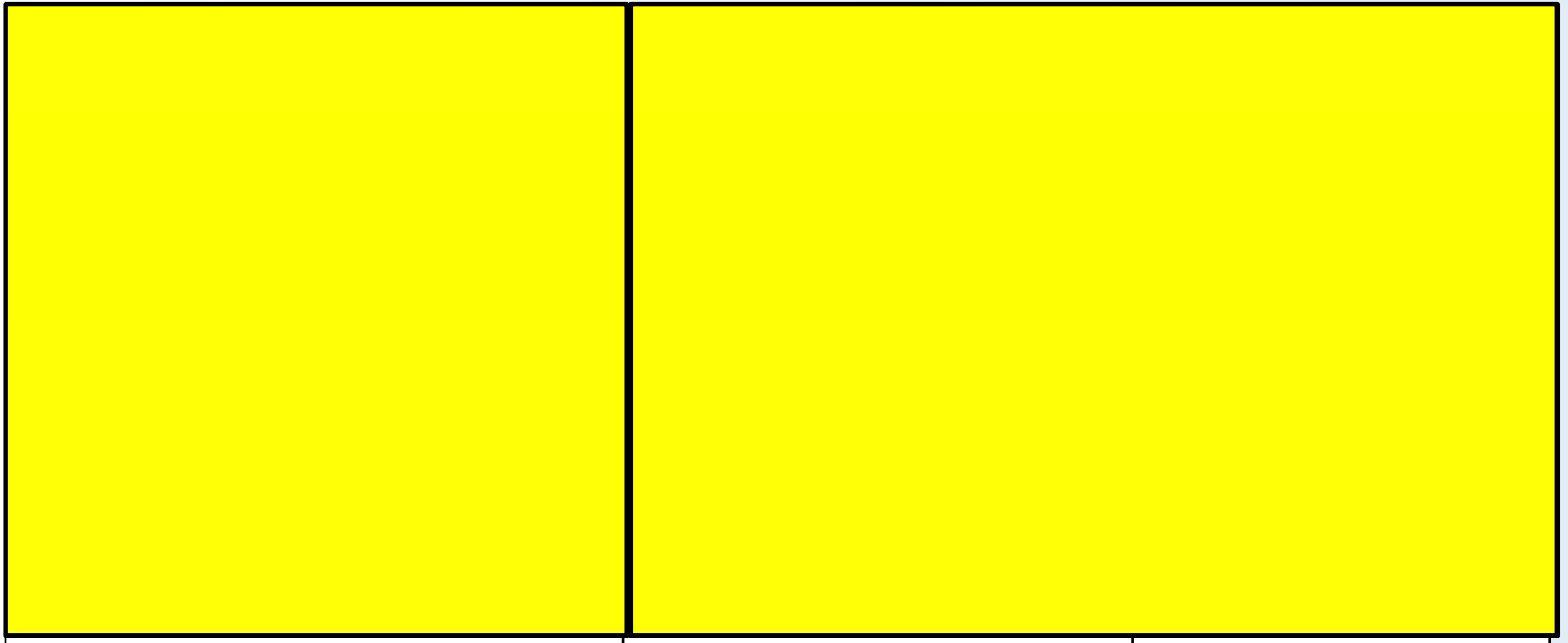
Level of poverty and school performance



Myth 2: We know what good teaching is and how to screen for the best teachers

- a. Teacher qualifications versus teacher quality
- b. Measuring teacher quality
- c. Purposes of evaluation

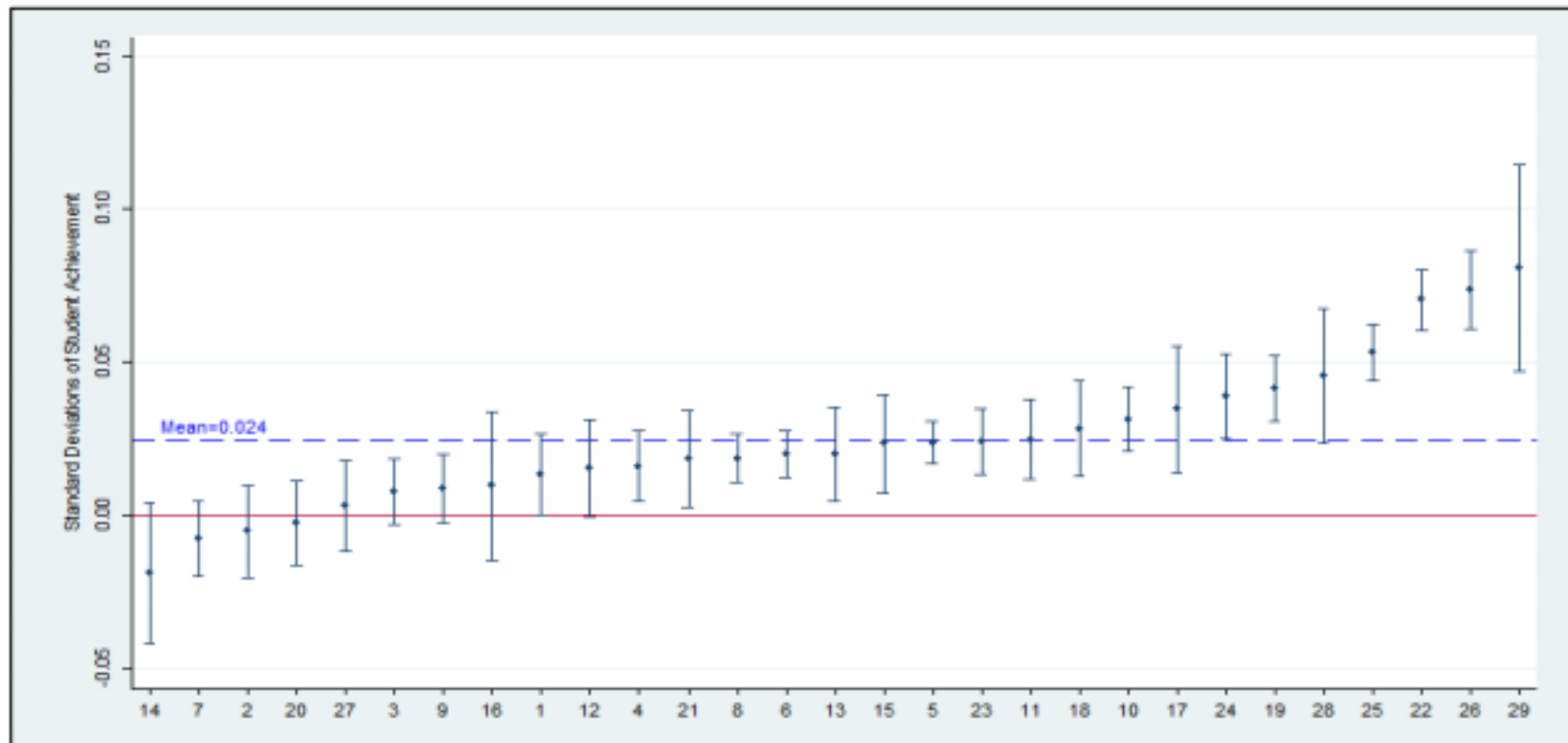
Identifying teacher quality



Myth 3: The most affluent schools have the best teachers

- a. Misattribution problem once again
- b. Yet, based in empirical findings
- c. Fact check: great teachers exist in all types of schools
- d. Implications for desegregation proposals

Access to Quality Teaching



Source: Mark Ehlert, Cory Koedel, Eric Parsons and Michael Podgursky *Choosing the right growth*, <http://educationnext.org/choosing-the-right-growth-measure/>

Strategies for moving forward

- a. Less direct, more indirect
 - i. Using evaluations to help teachers improve
 - ii. Using performance data to staff teachers in non-traditional ways
- b. Maybe we have our own misattribution problem
 - i. Teachers in a school context
 - ii. The value of curriculum