

January 25, 2012

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## **NEW REPORT GIVES THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA A GRADE OF “D” FOR ITS STATE-LEVEL TEACHER POLICIES**

**While many states have shown dramatic progress, report finds the District of Columbia has made little progress on policies to support and measure teacher effectiveness**

Today the National Council on Teacher Quality releases its 2011 *State Teacher Policy Yearbook*, its fifth annual report grading the states based on the rules and regulations that shape teacher quality

January 25, 2012 (Washington, DC)— A new report released today by the not-for-profit, non-partisan National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) finds major advances in teacher policy across the country, largely driven by state adoption of policies for including student achievement as a measure of effectiveness in teacher evaluations and using teacher effectiveness evidence in decisions about teacher tenure and dismissal.

Against this backdrop of dramatic progress in some states, as well as in the District of Columbia Public Schools, at the state level the District of Columbia is failing to take actions to help ensure an effective teacher in every classroom. The District of Columbia made very little progress this year on any of the *Yearbook*'s 36 research-based teacher policy goals.

The 2011 *Yearbook* provides a detailed analysis of the state-level policies the District of Columbia sets for teacher preparation, licensure, evaluation, career advancement, tenure, compensation, pensions and dismissal. NCTQ grades the states on the quality and rigor of these policies; the *Yearbook* is not an evaluation of the quality of teachers in the state.

The District of Columbia received an overall grade of **D**, based on the following grades:

<b>Teacher Policy Area</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Delivering well-prepared teachers	D
Expanding the pool of teachers	C
Identifying effective teachers	F
Retaining effective teachers	D+
Exiting ineffective teachers	D-

The District of Columbia's overall grade improved from a **D-** in NCTQ's 2009 *Yearbook*.

NCTQ President Kate Walsh said, "There is little doubt that the past two years have seen major changes in states' teacher policies. Rethinking how teacher performance is evaluated and tying teacher evaluations to student achievement marks an important advance in teacher effectiveness policy. But much work is left to be done by states to design and adopt policies from beginning to end – from entry into the profession to retirement and pensions – to consistently promote teacher quality." She added, "The District of

Columbia’s lack of progress on teacher effectiveness policies is a disappointment, given the important strides NCTQ has seen in other states and the District of Columbia Public Schools.”

Key findings about the District of Columbia’s teacher policy:

- In a new era, when teacher effectiveness in the classroom is becoming a matter of consequence and teacher evaluations will no longer be regarded as simply a formality, state level policy in the District of Columbia does not require teacher evaluations in to give consideration to teacher effectiveness or include objective measures of student performance.
- The District has no articulated consequences for poor teacher evaluations and ineffectiveness in the classroom is not grounds for teacher dismissal. Professional development is not aligned with teacher evaluations. Furthermore, time on the job, rather than teacher effectiveness in the classroom, is the basis for granting teachers tenure or permanent status.
- The District’s standards for conferring teaching licenses are too low. Requirements for the preparation of elementary and secondary teachers are in need of improvement.
- In particular, the District sets extremely low expectations for special education teachers. The state only offers a completely generic K-12 certification for special education licensing, meaning the preparation that special education teachers receive pays no attention to grade and subject specific content required of any other teacher.
- The District could do a great deal more to improve alternate routes by requiring them to be streamlined, relevant, and of reasonable length.
- D.C.’s one teacher policy bright spot is related to its teacher pension supports. The state’s pension system meets benchmarks for financial sustainability.

### **For copies of the Yearbook**

The District of Columbia’s *Yearbook*, which includes detailed national comparisons, is immediately available for free download at [www.nctq.org/stpy](http://www.nctq.org/stpy). For questions about the report, please contact Sarah Brody at (202) 393-0020 or [sbrody@nctq.org](mailto:sbrody@nctq.org).

### **Funding**

The *State Teacher Policy Yearbook* is funded by private foundations across the United States, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, George Gund Foundation, Gleason Family Foundation and the Joyce Foundation. *NCTQ accepts no funding from the federal government.*

### **About NCTQ**

The National Council on Teacher Quality is a Washington D.C. based non-profit, non-partisan research and advocacy group, founded in 2000, to build the case for a comprehensive reform agenda that would challenge the current structure and regulation of the profession. NCTQ advocates for reforms in a broad range of teacher policies at the federal, state, and local levels in order to increase the number of effective teachers. NCTQ is committed to lending transparency and increasing public awareness about the four sets of institutions that have the greatest impact on teacher quality: states, teacher preparation programs, school districts and teachers unions. For more information, see [www.nctq.org](http://www.nctq.org).

	Overall State Grade 2011	Overall State Grade 2009	Progress Ranking 2009-2011
Florida	B	C	9
Oklahoma	B-	D+	13
Rhode Island	B-	D	5
Tennessee	B-	C-	16
Indiana	C+	D	1
Michigan	C+	D-	3
Ohio	C+	D+	11
Arkansas	C	C-	25
Colorado	C	D+	12
Delaware	C	D	6
Georgia	C	C-	23
Illinois	C	D+	4
Massachusetts	C	D+	13
New York	C	D+	13
Alabama	C-	C-	19
Connecticut	C-	D+	25
Louisiana	C-	C-	20
Minnesota	C-	D-	2
Nevada	C-	D-	7
South Carolina	C-	C-	41
Texas	C-	C-	36
Utah	C-	D	9
Washington	C-	D+	25
Arizona	D+	D+	20
California	D+	D+	51
Idaho	D+	D-	8
Kentucky	D+	D+	41
Maryland	D+	D	17
Mississippi	D+	D+	47
New Jersey	D+	D+	36
New Mexico	D+	D+	39
North Carolina	D+	D+	32
Pennsylvania	D+	D	18
Virginia	D+	D+	41
West Virginia	D+	D+	41
Alaska	D	D	47
District of Columbia	D	D-	25
Iowa	D	D	23
Kansas	D	D-	31
Missouri	D	D	47
North Dakota	D	D-	34
South Dakota	D	D	38
Wisconsin	D	D	41
Wyoming	D	D-	20
Hawaii	D-	D-	32
Maine	D-	F	34
Nebraska	D-	D-	39
New Hampshire	D-	D-	25
Oregon	D-	D-	25
Vermont	D-	F	46
Montana	F	F	47