

For Immediate Release
December 8, 2015

Contact: Dan Glaser, dglaser@nctq.org
Phone 202-393-0020 x117

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS POLICIES INADEQUATE; STATE EARNS “D+”

New Report from NCTQ Finds the District of Columbia Lags Behind Most States in Enacting Policies that Support Effective Teaching

December 8, 2015 (Washington, DC) — The National Council on Teacher Quality today released its ninth annual *State Teacher Policy Yearbook*, which includes a 360-degree analysis of every state-level law, rule and regulation that shapes the effectiveness of the teaching profession in the District of Columbia. This is a review of state-level policy in the District, not the policies of the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS).

The District of Columbia received an overall grade of D+, holding steady on its score since the 2013 *Yearbook*. The average grade for 2015 across all 50 states and D.C. is a C-.

Yearbook Goal Areas	District of Columbia's 2015 Grades
Area 1: Delivering Well-Prepared Teachers	C-
Area 2: Expanding the Teacher Pool	C
Area 3: Identifying Effective Teachers	C-
Area 4: Retaining Effective Teachers	D-
Area 5: Dismissing Ineffective Teachers	D
Average Overall Grade	D+

NCTQ Vice President Sandi

Jacobs said, "In terms of state-level policy, the District of Columbia is becoming the exception to the rule on teacher effectiveness policy, and not for the better. Nationwide the glass is really starting to look half full on states' efforts to drive teacher effectiveness through smarter policy. Most states still have plenty of room for improvement, but the District of Columbia has not kept pace with the progress being made on these issues across the country."

Some of the District of Columbia's teacher preparation and licensing policies are more in step with teacher effectiveness, but not enough to ensure that teachers are prepared for the demands of college- and career-readiness standards:

- *Admission standards.* The District of Columbia requires that teacher preparation programs admit candidates with strong academic records, a practice that could help get teacher effectiveness right from the start.
- *Elementary and middle school teacher preparation.* The District of Columbia requires elementary teacher candidates to take content knowledge tests for initial licensure to ensure that teachers have mastered the content they are required to teach. Middle school teachers are required to pass content tests in all subjects they will teach.
- *Science of reading.* However, the District does not ensure elementary teachers' knowledge of effective reading instruction.
- *Secondary teacher preparation.* District of Columbia also has significant loopholes for secondary teacher licensing for science and social studies.

- *Special education teachers.* The District of Columbia still offers a K-12 special education license, a license that wrongly presumes special education teachers do not need to master grade and subject specific content knowledge.
- *Induction.* The District is one of only 11 state education agencies that does not have any induction requirements for new teachers.

The District of Columbia requires evaluations of teacher effectiveness but doesn't use results to inform policy, pay or practice:

- *Teacher evaluation.* The District of Columbia requires annual teacher evaluations and requires student achievement to be included as the preponderant criterion in teacher evaluations.
- *Tenure.* However, in the District, teachers can be granted tenure virtually automatically with no attention to teacher effectiveness.
- *Dismissal policy.* The District of Columbia does not articulate that ineffectiveness is grounds for teacher dismissal.
- *“Last in, first out” policies.* The District also makes no effort to require that teacher performance (rather than only seniority) is considered in making layoff decisions.
- *Support for teachers.* While it requires that teachers receive feedback on their evaluations and that evaluation results help inform professional development, the District does not require teachers with poor ratings to have improvement plans.
- *Support for performance pay.* The District of Columbia also does not support performance pay or differential pay for teachers in high-need schools or shortage subject areas.

The *2015 District of Columbia State Teacher Policy Yearbook* is immediately available for free download [here](#). The website also provides searchable access to the entire *Yearbook* dataset, including topical pages with up-to-date data on state teacher policy, a [customized search tool](#) and user-friendly options for generating graphic results that can be exported and shared.

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The *State Teacher Policy Yearbook* is funded by private foundations across the United States, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, The Joyce Foundation and The Walton Family Foundation. NCTQ accepts no funding from the federal government.

The National Council on Teacher Quality is a nonpartisan research and policy group committed to modernizing the teaching profession based on the belief that all children deserve effective teachers. We recognize that it is not teachers who bear responsibility for their profession's many challenges, but the institutions with the greatest authority and influence over teachers. To that end we work to achieve fundamental changes in the policy and practices of teacher preparation programs, school districts, state governments, and teachers unions. Our Board of Directors and Advisory Board come from a broad range of backgrounds and perspectives, and they all believe that policy changes are overdue in the recruitment and retention of teachers. More information about NCTQ can be found on our website, www.nctq.org.

	Overall State Grade 2015	Overall State Grade 2013	Overall State Grade 2011	Overall State Grade 2009
Florida	B+	B+	B	C
Indiana	B	B-	C+	D
Louisiana	B	B	C-	C-
New York	B	B-	C	D+
Tennessee	B	B	B-	C-
Arkansas	B-	B-	C	C-
Connecticut	B-	B-	C-	D+
Delaware	B-	C+	C	D
Georgia	B-	B-	C	C-
Massachusetts	B-	B-	C	D+
Ohio	B-	B-	C+	D+
Oklahoma	B-	B-	B-	D+
Rhode Island	B-	B	B-	D
Illinois	C+	C+	C	D+
Michigan	C+	B-	C+	D-
New Jersey	C+	B-	D+	D+
Utah	C+	C	C-	D
Virginia	C+	C+	D+	D+
Colorado	C	C+	C	D+
Kentucky	C	C	D+	D+
Mississippi	C	C	D+	D+
New Mexico	C	D+	D+	D+
South Carolina	C	C-	C-	C-
Arizona	C-	C-	D+	D+
Idaho	C-	D+	D+	D-
Maine	C-	C-	D-	F
Minnesota	C-	C-	C-	D-
Missouri	C-	C-	D	D
Nevada	C-	C-	C-	D-
North Carolina	C-	C	D+	D+
Pennsylvania	C-	C-	D+	D
Texas	C-	C-	C-	C-
Washington	C-	C-	C-	D+
West Virginia	C-	C-	D+	D+
Alabama	D+	C-	C-	C-
District of Columbia	D+	D+	D	D-
Hawaii	D+	D+	D-	D-
Kansas	D+	D	D	D-
Maryland	D+	D+	D+	D
California	D	D+	D+	D+
Iowa	D	D	D	D
Nebraska	D	D-	D-	D-
New Hampshire	D	D	D-	D-
North Dakota	D	D	D	D-
Oregon	D	D	D-	D-
Wisconsin	D	D+	D	D
Wyoming	D	D	D	D-
Alaska	D-	D	D	D
South Dakota	D-	D-	D	D
Vermont	D-	D-	D-	F
Montana	F	F	F	F