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MISSISSIPPI EARNS C GRADE FOR TEACHER POLICIES IN NEW EDITION OF NATIONAL YEARBOOK

STATE DEMONSTRATES NO PROGRESS IN ITS STATE TEACHER POLICIES TO IMPROVE TEACHER QUALITY SINCE 2015

Washington, DC--Today, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) released its bi-annual *2017 State Teacher Policy Yearbook*, finding that states' previous rapid progress to modernize their teacher policies has largely slowed. Mississippi's overall grade for its teaching policies remained at a C grade, the same grade it earned in the *2015 State Teacher Policy Yearbook*. By comparison, the overall grade nationally remains unchanged between 2015 and 2017, staying at a C- grade.

From 2007 until 2015, most states took aggressive steps to improve the teaching profession. However, since the last edition of the Yearbook in 2015, few states have initiated any new actions to improve their policies guiding how teachers are selected, prepared, evaluated, and retained. As a result, state grades have mostly stagnated, with more state grades decreasing than at any other time in the *Yearbook's* history.

This year, among all 50 states and the District of Columbia, 19 states earned a higher grade than Mississippi, seven states performed as well as Mississippi, and 24 states earned a lower grade. Florida and Louisiana both earned B+ grades, the highest in this year's *Yearbook*.

"States' teacher policies have an enormous impact on the quality of education in the state," said Elizabeth Ross, Managing Director of State Policy at NCTQ. "By highlighting opportunities for improvement, as well as strong policies, this Yearbook is designed to catalyze state action. We know the progress states are capable of making and urge them to do so. Teachers and students deserve nothing less."

Mississippi has several key opportunities for growth. In its *2017 Yearbook*, NCTQ reported that the state earned an F for its policies concerning Special Education Teacher Preparation, under which it does not require special education teacher candidates to demonstrate the necessary content knowledge of core subjects including teaching reading, and Retaining Effective Teachers, under which it does not support teacher leadership opportunities for its more effective teachers, nor does it base licensure advancement, tenure decisions, dismissal, or layoffs on teacher effectiveness.

Mississippi earned commendation for its policies governing Hiring, where it earned a B. It also earned a "Best Practice" designation in Provisional and Emergency Licensure, where the state requires that all teachers pass all required subject-matter tests as a condition of initial licensure.

The full *2017 State Teacher Policy Yearbook* is available [here](#), with comprehensive information regarding each state's teacher policies available in NCTQ's [State Teacher Policy Database](#).

To compare Mississippi to other states across the country in eight key measures, including teacher pay, teacher diversity, and educator equity, please look [here](#).

For more information, or to arrange an interview with Elizabeth Ross, please contact Eric Duncan at eduncan@nctq.org.

The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) is a nonpartisan research and policy group, committed to modernizing the teaching profession and based on the belief that all children deserve effective teachers. NCTQ is the nation's expert on the quality of teacher preparation programs and evaluates national teacher education against evidence-based criteria. More information about NCTQ can be found on our website, www.nctq.org

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