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NEW REPORT GIVES RHODE ISLAND A GRADE OF “B-” FOR TEACHER POLICIES

Rhode Island is a national leader on teacher effectiveness policy; State improves from D in 2009 to earn one of the highest grades on teacher policy review

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.

Rhode Island earns one of the highest grades given by NCTQ and ranks number five in the nation on progress against NCTQ’s 36 research-based goals.

The 2011 *State Teacher Policy Yearbook* provides a detailed analysis of Rhode Island’s progress on the policies it 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.

Rhode Island received an overall grade of **B-**, based on the following grades:

Teacher Policy Area	Grade
Delivering well-prepared teachers	D+
Expanding the pool of teachers	B-
Identifying effective teachers	A-
Retaining effective teachers	D
Exiting ineffective teachers	B+

Rhode Island’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. Rhode Island is a trailblazer on teacher effectiveness policy – making important connections between teacher evaluation and other decisions of consequence about teachers. Still, 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.”

Key findings about Rhode Island’s teacher policy:

- Rhode Island is part of an unprecedented effort across the states to adopt policies that use objective measures of student achievement, such as value-added or growth data, as part of teacher evaluations. Rhode Island is one of 12 states where student achievement is required to be the most significant factor in teacher evaluations.
- Rhode Island’s policies ensure that teacher effectiveness in the classroom will become a matter of consequence and performance evaluation will no longer be regarded as simply a formality. Rhode Island requires annual evaluation of all teachers and clearly articulates that ineffectiveness in the classroom is grounds for dismissal. Tenure decisions in the state are required to be made based on teacher effectiveness, not just time on the job. Rhode Island also requires classroom performance to be considered in making decisions about teacher layoffs.
- However, Rhode Island, like most states, could do more to ensure the quality of teachers entering the profession. Requirements for elementary and secondary teachers are in need of considerable improvement.
- Rhode Island is one of seven states with a high quality alternate route to teacher certification that includes a diversity of usage and providers, flexible and streamlined preparation requirements, and practice teaching and mentoring for alternate route candidates.
- Rhode Island’s pension system is significantly underfunded, requires excessive contributions, and is not portable, flexible or fair to all teachers.

For copies of the Yearbook

Rhode Island’s *Yearbook*, which includes detailed national comparisons, is immediately available for free download at www.nctq.org/stpy. For questions about the report, please contact Sarah Brody at (202) 393-0020 or sbrody@nctq.org.

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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, 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.

	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