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MARYLAND EARNS “D+” FOR TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS POLICIES

New report from the National Council on Teacher Quality gives Maryland poor grades for lack of policies that support effective teaching

January 30, 2014 (Washington, DC) — The National Council on Teacher Quality today released its seventh annual *State Teacher Policy Yearbook*, which includes a 360-degree analysis of every state law, rule and regulation that shapes the effectiveness of the teaching profession in Maryland.

Maryland has consistently earned low grades in the *Yearbook*. The average grade across all 50 states and the District of Columbia in 2013 is an improving “C-”.

NCTQ President Kate Walsh said, "This year's *State Teacher Policy Yearbook* proves that it is both possible and practical for states to drive teacher effectiveness policy. Many states once argued that raising the bar for teacher preparation, licensing and evaluation and tying personnel decisions to results for kids couldn't be done. Now these policies are on the books in increasing numbers of states across the nation."

Key Yearbook Findings

Teacher effectiveness is increasingly being factored into personnel decisions across the states:

Yearbook Goal Areas	Maryland's 2013 Grades
Area 1: Delivering Well-Prepared Teachers	D+
Area 2: Expanding the Teacher Pool	C-
Area 3: Identifying Effective Teachers	C-
Area 4: Retaining Effective Teachers	C-
Area 5: Dismissing Ineffective Teachers	F
Average Overall Grade	D+

- *Teacher evaluation.* Maryland is one of 28 states that requires annual evaluations for all teachers and is one of 35 states that requires student achievement/growth to be an important criterion in evaluating teacher effectiveness.
- *Tying performance to tenure.* However, in Maryland, teacher tenure decisions are made virtually automatically after three years, with no consideration of classroom effectiveness.
- *Dismissing ineffective teachers.* Twenty-two states, including Maryland, fail to articulate that classroom ineffectiveness is grounds for a teacher's dismissal.
- *Prohibiting “last in, first out” policies.* Maryland does not require districts to consider teacher performance in making layoff decisions.

In many states, progress is being made in setting higher standards for the preparation of teachers, but not in Maryland:

- *Elementary teacher preparation.* Because the state's content tests for elementary school licensure do not provide separate passing scores for every subject, Maryland does not ensure that teachers have mastered the content they are required to teach.

- *Science of reading.* Maryland's teacher preparation requirements articulate that teachers should know the science of reading; however, it is one of 34 states that do not require elementary teachers to pass a test of effective reading instruction.
- *Admission requirements.* Maryland does not ensure that teacher preparation programs admit candidates with strong academic records. Nearly all states set a low academic bar but Maryland sets no such bar for admission. The state has no requirements for candidates to demonstrate academic proficiency, such as a minimum GPA requirement.
- *Strengthening secondary teacher preparation.* Maryland has significant loopholes in its secondary teacher licensing requirements. Maryland should require that all secondary teachers pass a content test in every subject they are licensed or have an endorsement to teach.
- *Special education teachers.* Commendably, Maryland is one of 16 states that does not offer 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.

There has been little action on policies aimed at recruiting and retaining the best teachers in the profession across the states:

- *Use of evaluations for improving practice.* Maryland does not require that all teachers to receive feedback on their evaluations and does not require professional development to be informed by evaluation findings. However, the state does mandate improvement plans for teachers with poor evaluation ratings.
- *Support for performance pay.* Maryland is one of 26 states that does not support performance pay.

Very few states provide truly flexible pathways into teaching:

- *Alternate routes.* Maryland's alternative pathways to teacher certification are in need of improvement.

The *2013 Maryland State Teacher Policy Yearbook* is immediately available for free download at: www.nctq.org/statepolicy. The newly redesigned 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.

The *State Teacher Policy Yearbook* was funded by private foundations across the United States, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, The Joyce Foundation and The Walton Family Foundation. NCTQ accepts no funding from the federal government. The National Council of Teacher Quality comprised of reform-minded Democrats, Republicans, and Independents is a non-partisan research and policy group committed to restructuring the teaching profession based on the belief that all children deserve effective teachers. More information about NCTQ, including a list of the Board of Directors and Advisory Board, can be found on the NCTQ website, www.nctq.org

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