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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MARYLAND'S STATE EDUCATION SYSTEM RANKS NUMBER ONE OVERALL

NATIONAL EDUCATION NEWSPAPER SAYS STATE'S SYSTEM HAS MOVED TO THE HEAD OF THE CLASS

BALTIMORE (January 7, 2009) – The Maryland public school system has moved to the head of the class, according to an independent national report being released today.

Education Week, the nation's leading education newspaper, looked at data in six critical categories over the past two years, and found that Maryland's state education system is at the very top of national rankings.

Maryland placed at the top of the list in *Education Week's* tally, just ahead of Massachusetts. Other high-scoring systems include New York and Virginia.

Maryland's ranking is based on student performance and State education policies that reflect more than a decade of work on a preK-12 curriculum; state accountability and standards; and work on school readiness, high school reform, and preparation for college and the workplace.

“School reform doesn't happen overnight. It takes a long-term commitment to high standards and collaboration, always keeping in mind the students and the families we serve,” said State Superintendent of Schools Nancy S. Grasmick. “The ‘Quality Counts’ report reaffirms Maryland's status as one of the nation's most desirable places to live, work, and raise a family.”

Maryland has had a history of success in *Education Week's* annual review of state education systems; it ranked third in the 2008 “Quality Counts” report. But this is the first time Maryland has ranked first overall.

The publication's detailed analysis of state education systems rated Maryland's program of transitions and alignment—the policies and programs that take students from preschool through college- and work-readiness—as tops in the nation. Maryland scored an A, 96.4 percent.

(more)



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Maryland also ranked among the nation's leaders in "Chance for Success," which looks at how well graduates achieve beyond high school; and in school finance, a score helped greatly by the Bridge to Excellence Act funding.

The overall grade includes scores from the 2008 "Quality Counts" report in K-12 achievement, ranking high thanks to a strong showing on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), high school graduation rates, and Advanced Placement (AP) performance. Also included are 2008 scores in standards, assessments and accountability; and in teacher quality and preparation.

Education Week has often spotlighted the strength of Maryland schools in "Quality Counts." The highly regarded report, now in its 13th year, has gone through some major changes over the past three years, while continuing to assess state progress in a variety of areas key to classroom success.

Most of the state-level data gathered by *Education Week* comes from a policy survey of the states conducted in the summer and fall of 2008. In addition, the publication draws on state-level data from such organizations as the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Bureau of the Census, and the American Federation of Teachers.

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Grading Summary

	Overall State Grade		Quality Counts 2009	Quality Counts 2008	Quality Counts 2008	Quality Counts 2009	Quality Counts 2008	Quality Counts 2009
	Grade	Score	Chance for Success	K-12 Achievement	Standards, Assessments, & Accountability	Transitions & Alignment	Teaching Profession	School Finance
Alabama	C	75.4	C-	F	A-	C+	B-	C-
Alaska	C	73.2	C	D+	B	C-	D-	B-
Arizona	C-	72.2	C-	D	A-	C-	D+	D+
Arkansas	B-	79.6	C-	D	B+	B	B+	C
California	C	76.1	C	D	A-	B-	C-	C
Colorado	C	73.6	B	C-	B-	D	D+	C
Connecticut	C+	77.0	A-	D	C	C-	C-	B+
Delaware	C+	77.4	B-	C-	B+	D	C+	B-
District of Columbia	D+	68.3	C+	F	C+	D+	D-	—
Florida	B-	79.6	C+	C	A-	C+	B	C-
Georgia	B-	80.0	C	D+	A-	B	B	C+
Hawaii	C	75.1	C+	D	B-	C-	C+	—
Idaho	D+	69.1	C+	C-	C	D-	D	D
Illinois	C	72.9	B-	D+	C+	D+	D+	C-
Indiana	C+	79.0	C+	C-	A	C+	C-	C+
Iowa	C	76.3	B	C-	D+	C+	B-	C
Kansas	C	73.3	B	C	C+	D-	D+	C+
Kentucky	C	76.0	C	D+	B+	C	B-	C-
Louisiana	C	74.4	D+	D-	A	C	B	D
Maine	C+	77.7	B-	C	C+	B-	D	B+
Maryland	B	84.7	B+	B	B	A	C-	B
Massachusetts	B	84.6	A	B	A-	C	C	B
Michigan	C+	77.8	C+	D	A-	B	D+	B-
Minnesota	C	76.2	B+	C	C	C	D+	C+
Mississippi	D+	69.4	D+	F	B	C	D	D+
Missouri	C-	72.4	C+	D	C	D+	C	C
Montana	C-	71.2	C+	C-	C-	D	D+	C
Nebraska	C-	69.8	B	D+	D	F	D+	C+
Nevada	D+	68.8	D+	D-	C+	D+	C-	D
New Hampshire	C	75.9	A-	C	C	C-	D	B-
New Jersey	B-	81.9	A-	B-	B-	C+	C	B+
New Mexico	C+	76.9	D+	D-	A-	A	C+	C
New York	B	84.1	B	C-	A	B+	C+	B+
North Carolina	C	75.5	C+	D+	B+	D+	B	D+
North Dakota	C	73.7	B	C	C	D+	D+	C
Ohio	B-	81.2	B-	C-	A	B-	C+	B-
Oklahoma	C	76.1	C-	D	A-	C+	B-	D+
Oregon	C-	71.5	C	D	C+	C+	F	C
Pennsylvania	B-	80.3	B	C+	C+	B-	C+	B-
Rhode Island	C	76.0	B-	D	B+	C-	D	A-
South Carolina	C+	78.9	C	D	A	C	A-	C
South Dakota	C-	71.1	B-	C-	C+	D-	D	C-
Tennessee	C+	77.0	C-	D+	A-	B+	C	D+
Texas	C+	77.1	C	C	B+	B	C	D+
Utah	C	73.3	B-	C-	C+	C-	C-	D+
Vermont	B-	79.5	B+	C+	B-	C-	C-	B+
Virginia	B	83.2	B	C	A	B-	B-	C+
Washington	C	75.2	B-	C-	B-	C	C	C-
West Virginia	B-	80.0	C-	F	A	A	C+	B
Wisconsin	C+	78.0	B	C-	C+	C-	C+	B
Wyoming	C	74.4	B-	C-	C+	D	D-	A-
U.S.	C	76.2	C+	D+	B	C	C	C+

Note: The District of Columbia and Hawaii are single-district jurisdictions. As a result, it is not possible to calculate measures of financial equity, which capture the distribution of funding across districts within a state. The District of Columbia and Hawaii do not receive grades for school finance.

SOURCE: EPE Research Center, 2009. This table integrates findings across two years of indicators reported in the 2008 and 2009 editions of *Quality Counts*.