

MAKING THE GRADE

EFFECTIVE TEACHING IN
EVERY CLASSROOM



A Case Study in How Quality Teacher Evaluations Lead to Better Teachers

New Haven, Conn., might be best known as the home of prestigious Yale University, but it's also a place where the benefits of new, more meaningful teacher evaluations are making a notable difference in public school classrooms.

Just last week, the New Haven School Board released findings on how its teacher evaluation system was impacting the district's nearly 1,500 teachers, who are now graded on a five-step scale from "needs improvement" to "exemplary." The findings showed:

- More than one-third of the 58 New Haven teachers who were rated "needs improvement" in fall 2011 had improved performance by the end of the 2011-12 school year.
- The ranks of "exemplary" teachers in the district rose from 8 percent in 2010-11 – the first school year the evaluations were used - to 13 percent in 2011-12.
- Teacher satisfaction with the evaluation system rose from 42 percent in 2010-11 to 50 percent in 2011-12.

The improved performance and growing teacher support were hardly a surprise to New Haven Assistant Superintendent Garth Harries. He said the goal of the evaluation system is not punitive, but supportive, giving the district's teachers the help they need to become better educators.

"We want to make sure that our best teachers stay and stay in the classroom and continue to develop throughout the course of their career," Harries said.

The good news for Pennsylvanians is that the state Department of Education [is rolling out a similar evaluation system](#) – one that gives teachers the feedback and support they need to improve. So the results that students, parents and taxpayers are seeing in New Haven can happen in every public school district in our commonwealth.

Stay tuned for more updates from **Making the Grade: Effective Teaching in Every Classroom.**

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*Making the Grade:
Effective Teaching in
Every Classroom* is
Pennsylvania Partnerships
for Children's project
designed to create
awareness about the
importance of an effective
teacher in every classroom
and advance the public
policies required to assure
every child benefits from
effective teaching every
school day.

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