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NEW REPORT GIVES KENTUCKY A GRADE OF “D+” FOR TEACHER POLICIES

While many states have shown dramatic progress, report finds Kentucky has made almost no progress on policies to support and measure teacher effectiveness

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.

Against this backdrop of dramatic progress in some states, Kentucky is failing to take actions to help ensure an effective teacher in every classroom. Kentucky made very little progress this year on any of the *Yearbook*'s 36 research-based teacher policy goals.

The 2011 *Yearbook* provides a detailed analysis of the policies Kentucky 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; not on the quality of teachers in the state.

Kentucky received an overall grade of **D+**, based on the following grades:

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

Kentucky's overall grade is unchanged since 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. But 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." She added, "Kentucky's lack of progress on teacher effectiveness policies is a disappointment, given the important strides NCTQ has seen in other states."

Key findings about Kentucky's teacher policy:

- In a new era, when teacher effectiveness in the classroom is becoming a matter of consequence and teacher evaluations will no longer be regarded as simply a formality, Kentucky does not require annual teacher evaluations for all teachers and teacher evaluations give no consideration to teacher effectiveness and include no objective measures of student performance.
- Kentucky does not articulate, through evaluation or dismissal policy, that ineffectiveness in the classroom is grounds for teacher dismissal, and time on the job, rather than teacher effectiveness in the classroom, is the basis for granting teachers tenure or permanent status in Kentucky.
- Kentucky's standards for teacher preparation and licensing are too low. Requirements for elementary and secondary teachers are in need of improvement. The state's requirement of a master's degree for licensure is also problematic and not aligned with other effectiveness policies.
- Kentucky sets extremely low expectations for special education teachers. The state only offers a completely generic K-12 certification for special education licensing, meaning the preparation that special education teachers receive pays no attention to grade and subject specific content required of any other teacher.
- Although Kentucky offers numerous alternative certification routes, all of them could use improvement in terms of their selectivity and preparation requirements.
- Kentucky continues to require that teacher salaries are tied to advanced degrees, even though research is clear that there is no link to teacher effectiveness.
- The financial sustainability of Kentucky's pension system is questionable. It is significantly underfunded and is not portable, flexible or fair to all teachers.

For copies of the Yearbook

Kentucky'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