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Contact Sarah Brody  
Phone 202.393.0020 ext. 110  
sbrody@nctq.org

## **NEW REPORT FINDS MAJOR STRIDES ON TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS POLICIES IN STATES**

### **National Council on Teacher Quality Releases *2011 State Teacher Policy Yearbook***

**Fifth Annual Report Grades the States and Documents More Progress in the Laws, Rules and Regulations That Shape Teacher Quality Than In Any Previous Review**

**Against Backdrop of Dramatic Improvements in Some States, Others Still Fail to Take Actions to Ensure an Effective Teacher in Every Classroom**

January 25, 2012 (Washington, DC)— A new, 52-volume report released today by the not-for-profit, non-partisan National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) finds a sea change on teacher evaluation policy in the states, with unprecedented efforts to adopt policies that use student achievement as a significant or preponderant criterion in measuring teacher effectiveness.

- Overall, 28 state teacher policy grades improved in 2011 over performance on NCTQ's 2009 policy review, with 7 states -- Florida, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Indiana, Michigan and Ohio – receiving the highest teacher quality grades ever handed out by NCTQ.
- The dramatic improvements in teacher policy grades are largely driven by advances in teacher evaluations, including adoption of policies for including student achievement as a measure of teacher effectiveness, and using teacher effectiveness evidence in decisions about teacher tenure and dismissal.
- Most states ignore opportunities to ensure teacher effectiveness when it comes to teacher preparation and licensing, and most fail to link effectiveness data to a host of policies – including compensation, professional development and mentoring – that could improve teacher practice and retention of the most effective teachers.
- NCTQ grades the states on the quality and rigor of state teacher policies; not on the quality of teachers in the state.

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 – from entry into the profession to retirement and pensions – to consistently promote teacher quality."

#### **Key Findings:**

- 1. NCTQ awards its highest teacher quality grades ever to seven states – largely driven by new state policies for identifying effective teachers and exiting ineffective teachers.**

- Florida, Oklahoma, Rhode Island and Tennessee lead the nation on teacher quality policy. Florida received the highest overall teacher policy grade with a B; Oklahoma, Rhode Island, and Tennessee earned B minuses.
  - Indiana, Michigan and Ohio received C-plus grades – a marked improvement over 2009, when the highest grade received by any state was a C, and Florida was the *only* state to earn it. In fact, 14 states earned a grade of C or higher this year, compared to just one in 2009.
  - States topping the list for the most progress on teacher policy include Indiana, Minnesota, Michigan, Illinois and Rhode Island.
  - Overall 28 states improved their grades for 2011.
  - Alaska, California, Mississippi, Missouri and Montana made no progress on their teacher policies since NCTQ's last review.
- 2. There has been an unprecedented effort across the states to adopt policies that use student achievement as a significant or preponderant criterion in measuring teacher effectiveness.**
- Just about half of all states (24) have adopted policies to consider classroom effectiveness – as indicated by objective measures of student achievement such as value-added or growth data – as a part of how teacher performance is evaluated.
  - In 12 of those states, student achievement/growth is required to be the most significant criterion in teacher evaluations.
- 3. In some states, a new era in teaching has begun, when performance evaluation will no longer be regarded as simply a formality and teacher effectiveness in the classroom will become a matter of consequence.**
- Thirteen states now specify, either through dismissal or evaluation policy, that ineffectiveness in the classroom can lead to teacher dismissal.
  - States also are beginning to recognize tenure as more than a mere formality. Twelve states showed progress towards weighing a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom, not just his/her time on the job, in deciding whether to grant a teacher permanent status.
  - In 2009, not a single state awarded tenure based primarily on teacher effectiveness; 8 states now require that the performance of a teacher's students be central to the decision of whether that teacher is awarded tenure.
  - Eleven states require districts to consider teacher performance, not just seniority, in making decisions about layoffs.
  - A small but significant three states – Florida, Indiana, and Michigan – have adopted policies *requiring* that teacher performance be factored in the salary schedules for all teachers.
- 4. While states have made progress on evaluating the effectiveness of their *existing* teacher workforce, they've done much less to ensure the quality of teachers entering the profession.**
- The tests used by the vast majority of states to confer teaching licenses lack rigor and fail to ensure that teachers are knowledgeable in all the subjects they will teach.
  - The majority of states (32) have no requirements for assessing teacher proficiency in the science of reading. Just nine states require an adequate assessment of these skills, although that is more than twice the number that had such a test in the past.
  - Just two states in the nation – Indiana and Massachusetts – require adequate mathematics preparation for aspiring elementary school teachers.
  - Licensure loopholes in all but nine states allow teachers to teach for some period of time without passing all required licensing exams.
  - Thirty-nine states allow secondary-level science teachers to teach science courses with a general or combined science subject license.

- Sixteen states offer a generalist K-8 license and six more offer it in some circumstances, allowing teachers to teach grades 7 and 8 with preparation identical to that of a teacher certified to teach first or second grade.

### **Other findings:**

- Looking across the U.S., just half of the states (25) collect any meaningful objective data on teacher preparation program effectiveness. However, six states – Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Tennessee and Texas – more states than ever before, are judging the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs based on the effectiveness of the teachers they graduate.
- The financial health of state teacher pension systems continues to be a dramatic area of policy decline and a growing crisis. A full 35 of the states’ teacher pension systems are in peril, with 29 states losing ground on financial sustainability since NCTQ’s 2009 report.
- States’ requirements for the preparation of special education teachers continue to be abysmal. Thirty-five states allow special education teachers to earn a completely generic special education license to teach any special education students in any grade, K-12; this broad license is the *only* license offered in 19 of those states.
- States have made little progress in broadening the pipeline for attracting effective teachers into the profession through alternate routes. Just seven states offer genuine alternate routes that set high expectations for candidate entry into programs followed by accelerated, streamlined and flexible pathways into the teaching profession for talented individuals.

### **About the Yearbook**

NCTQ presents the most detailed analysis available of each state’s performance against and progress toward a set of 36 specific, research-based teacher policy goals aimed at helping states build a comprehensive policy framework in support of teacher effectiveness. Copies of the national report, as well as 51 companion state volumes (for the 50 states and the District of Columbia), methodology, and background on the report are available for download at [www.nctq.org/stpy](http://www.nctq.org/stpy).

### **Funding**

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, Gleason Family Foundation, George Gund 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. 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](http://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