

January 25, 2012

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NEW REPORT GIVES NEVADA A GRADE OF “C-” FOR TEACHER POLICIES

Nevada has shown progress on teacher effectiveness policy but still has considerable room for improvement

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.

Although many states received higher grades than Nevada, it is among the top ten states in terms of progress made against NCTQ’s 36 research-based teacher policy goals. Nevada’s overall grade improved a full letter grade from a **D-** in 2009.

The 2011 *State Teacher Policy Yearbook* provides a detailed analysis of Nevada progress on the policies it sets for teacher preparation, licensure, evaluation, career advancement, tenure, compensation, pensions and dismissal policies. NCTQ grades the states on the quality and rigor of these policies; the *Yearbook* is not an evaluation of the quality of teachers in the state.

Nevada received an overall grade of **C-**, based on the following grades:

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

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. Nevada made some important strides. 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."

Key findings about Nevada's teacher policy:

- Nevada is part of an unprecedented effort across the states to adopt policies that use objective measures of student achievement, such as value-added or growth data, as part of teacher evaluations. Nevada is one of 12 states that requires student achievement to be the most significant factor in teacher evaluations.
- Nevada policy is moving in the right direction to ensure that teacher effectiveness in the classroom will become a matter of consequence and performance evaluation will no longer be regarded as simply a formality. Evidence of student learning is a factor in tenure decisions in Nevada, but the state could do more to clarify that ineffectiveness in the classroom is grounds for dismissal. Nevada also prevents district from basing teacher layoffs on seniority alone.
- However, Nevada's standards for teacher preparation and licensing are too low. Requirements for elementary and secondary teachers are in need of improvement.
- In particular, Nevada 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 it has taken some important steps in the right direction, Nevada needs to do more to make its alternative routes selective, streamlined and geared to the immediate needs of new teachers.
- Nevada's pension system is significantly underfunded, requires excessive contributions, and is not portable, flexible or fair to all teachers.

For copies of the Yearbook

Nevada'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.

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, 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