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Contact: Maegan Rees  
Phone 202.393.0020 ext. 117  
mrees@nctq.org

## MINNESOTA EARNS “C-” FOR TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS POLICIES

### New report from the National Council on Teacher Quality gives Minnesota average grades for policies that support effective teaching

January 30, 2014 (Washington, DC) — The National Council on Teacher Quality today released its seventh annual *State Teacher Policy Yearbook*, which includes a 360-degree analysis of every state law, rule and regulation that shapes the effectiveness of the teaching profession in Minnesota.

Minnesota received an overall grade of C-, unchanged from 2011, the last year the state’s full portfolio of teacher policies was graded. In 2013, the average grade across all 50 states and the District of Columbia also is a “C-”.

NCTQ President Kate Walsh said, "This year’s *State Teacher Policy Yearbook* proves that it is both possible and practical for states to drive teacher effectiveness policy. Many states once argued that raising the bar for teacher preparation, licensing and evaluation and tying personnel decisions to results for kids couldn’t be done. Now these policies are on the books in increasing numbers of states across the nation."

#### Key Yearbook Findings

#### Teacher effectiveness is increasingly being factored into personnel decisions:

- *Teacher evaluation.* Minnesota does not require annual evaluations of all teachers but is one of 35 states that requires student achievement/growth to be an important criterion in evaluating teacher effectiveness.
- *Tying performance to tenure.* In Minnesota, however, teacher tenure decisions are made virtually automatically after three years, with no consideration of classroom effectiveness.
- *Dismissing ineffective teachers.* Twenty-two states, including Minnesota, fail to articulate that classroom ineffectiveness is grounds for a teacher’s dismissal.
- *Prohibiting “last in, first out” policies.* Minnesota does not require districts to consider teacher performance in making layoff decisions.

#### Progress is being made in setting higher standards for the preparation of teachers but there is much more to be done:

- *Elementary teacher preparation.* Minnesota’s content tests for elementary school licensure help to ensure teachers know all of the core content they will teach but would be improved if the tests provided passing scores for each subject teachers are required to teach.

Yearbook Goal Areas	Minnesota’s 2013 Grades
Area 1: Delivering Well-Prepared Teachers	C+
Area 2: Expanding the Teacher Pool	C
Area 3: Identifying Effective Teachers	C-
Area 4: Retaining Effective Teachers	D+
Area 5: Dismissing Ineffective Teachers	F
Average Overall Grade	C-

- *Secondary teacher preparation.* Minnesota is one of only four states that requires secondary teachers to pass a content test in every subject for which they are licensed or have an endorsement to teach.
- *Science of reading.* Minnesota is one of just 17 states that requires a rigorous test of scientifically-based reading knowledge for elementary teachers.
- *Admission requirements.* Minnesota does not ensure that teacher preparation programs admit candidates with strong academic records. The state has no requirements for candidates to demonstrate academic proficiency, such as a minimum GPA requirement.
- *Special education teachers.* Unfortunately, Minnesota only offers a K-12 special education license, a license that wrongly presumes special education teachers do not need to master grade and subject specific content knowledge.

**There has been much less action on policies aimed at recruiting and retaining the best teachers in the profession:**

- *Use of evaluations for improving practice.* Minnesota does not require that all teachers to receive feedback on their evaluations, but unlike most states the state both requires professional development to be informed by evaluation findings and improvement plans for teachers with poor evaluation ratings.
- *Support for performance pay.* Minnesota encourages performance pay but does not support differential pay for teachers in high-need schools or shortage subject areas.

**Very few states are providing flexible pathways into teaching:**

- *Alternate routes.* Minnesota's alternative pathways to teacher certification are in need of significant improvement.

*The 2013 Minnesota State Teacher Policy Yearbook* is immediately available for free download at: [www.nctq.org/statepolicy](http://www.nctq.org/statepolicy). The newly redesigned website also provides searchable access to the entire *Yearbook* dataset, including topical pages with up-to-date data on state teacher policy, a customized search tool and user-friendly options for generating graphic results that can be exported and shared.

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The *State Teacher Policy Yearbook* was funded by private foundations across the United States, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, The Joyce Foundation and The Walton Family Foundation. NCTQ accepts no funding from the federal government. The National Council of Teacher Quality comprised of reform-minded Democrats, Republicans, and Independents is a non-partisan research and policy group committed to restructuring the teaching profession based on the belief that all children deserve effective teachers. 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 2013	Overall State Grade 2011	Overall State Grade 2009
Florida	B+	B	C
Louisiana	B	C-	C-
Rhode Island	B	B-	D
Tennessee	B	B-	C-
Arkansas	B-	C	C-
Connecticut	B-	C-	D+
Georgia	B-	C	C-
Indiana	B-	C+	D
Massachusetts	B-	C	D+
Michigan	B-	C+	D-
New Jersey	B-	D+	D+
New York	B-	C	D+
Ohio	B-	C+	D+
Oklahoma	B-	B-	D+
Colorado	C+	C	D+
Delaware	C+	C	D
Illinois	C+	C	D+
Virginia	C+	D+	D+
Kentucky	C	D+	D+
Mississippi	C	D+	D+
North Carolina	C	D+	D+
Utah	C	C-	D
Alabama	C-	C-	C-
Arizona	C-	D+	D+
Maine	C-	D-	F
Minnesota	C-	C-	D-
Missouri	C-	D	D
Nevada	C-	C-	D-
Pennsylvania	C-	D+	D
South Carolina	C-	C-	C-
Texas	C-	C-	C-
Washington	C-	C-	D+
West Virginia	C-	D+	D+
California	D+	D+	D+
District of Columbia	D+	D	D-
Hawaii	D+	D-	D-
Idaho	D+	D+	D-
Maryland	D+	D+	D
New Mexico	D+	D+	D+
Wisconsin	D+	D	D
Alaska	D	D	D
Iowa	D	D	D
Kansas	D	D	D-
New Hampshire	D	D-	D-
North Dakota	D	D	D-
Oregon	D	D-	D-
Wyoming	D	D	D-
Nebraska	D-	D-	D-
South Dakota	D-	D	D
Vermont	D-	D-	F
Montana	F	F	F