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MISSOURI EARNS “C-” FOR TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS POLICIES

New report from the National Council on Teacher Quality gives Missouri improved but 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 Missouri.

Missouri received an overall grade of C-, an improvement from its grade of D in 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.* While Missouri does not require annual evaluations of all teachers, it is one of 35 states that requires student achievement/growth to be an important criterion in evaluating teacher effectiveness.
- *Prohibiting “last in, first out” policies.* Missouri is one of 18 states that requires districts to consider teacher performance in making layoff decisions.
- *Tying performance to tenure.* Unfortunately, however, in Missouri teacher tenure decisions are made virtually automatically without any consideration of teacher effectiveness.
- *Dismissing ineffective teachers.* Missouri also is one of 22 states that does not articulate that classroom ineffectiveness is grounds for a teacher’s dismissal.

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

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

- *Science of reading.* While Missouri’s teacher preparation requirements address the science of reading, Missouri is one of 34 states that does not administer an adequate test to ensure elementary teachers’ knowledge of effective reading instruction.

- *Secondary teacher preparation.* Missouri 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.
- *Elementary teacher preparation.* Unfortunately, Missouri's content tests for elementary school licensure fail to ensure teachers know all of the core content they will teach.
- *Special education teachers.* In addition, Missouri 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.
- *Raising admission requirements.* Missouri could strengthen teacher preparation by raising admission requirements to ensure that teacher preparation programs admit candidates with strong academic records, such as requiring a minimum GPA of 3.0.

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

- *Use of evaluations for improving practice.* While Missouri requires that all teachers receive feedback on their evaluations, the state does not require professional development to be informed by evaluation findings and does not mandate improvement plans for teachers with poor evaluation ratings.
- *Support for performance pay.* Missouri has some limited performance pay initiatives in the state 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.* Missouri's alternative pathways to teacher certification are in need of significant improvement.

The 2013 Missouri State Teacher Policy Yearbook is immediately available for free download at: 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.

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

	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