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NEW JERSEY EARNS “B-” FOR TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS POLICIES

New report from the National Council on Teacher Quality gives New Jersey significantly improved 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 New Jersey.

New Jersey received an overall grade of B-, significantly improved from a D+ in 2011, the last year the state’s full portfolio of teacher policies was graded. The average grade for 2013 across all 50 states and the District of Columbia 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.* New Jersey requires annual evaluations for all teachers and is one of 35 states that requires student achievement/growth to be an important criterion in evaluating teacher effectiveness.
- *Tying performance to tenure.* New Jersey is one of 20 states where evidence of student learning is considered in tenure decisions.
- *Dismissing ineffective teachers.* Twenty-nine states, including New Jersey, now articulate that classroom ineffectiveness is grounds for a teacher’s dismissal.
- *Prohibiting “last in, first out” policies.* However, New Jersey does not require districts to consider teacher performance in making layoff decisions.

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

Progress is being made in setting higher standards for the preparation of teachers:

- *Admission requirements.* New Jersey is one of just seven states that requires teacher preparation programs to admit candidates with a GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- *Elementary teacher preparation.* By providing separate passing scores for each subject, New Jersey’s content knowledge tests for elementary school licensure help to ensure that teachers have mastered the content they are required to teach.

- *Special education teachers.* New Jersey is one of 16 states that recognizes special education teachers need to master grade and subject specific content knowledge.
- *Science of reading.* Unfortunately, New Jersey is one of 34 states that does not ensure elementary teachers' knowledge of effective reading instruction.
- *Secondary teacher preparation.* In addition, New Jersey has significant loopholes in its requirements for secondary teacher licensing and does not ensure secondary teachers pass a content test in every subject they are licensed or have an endorsement to teach.

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

- *Use of evaluations for improving practice.* Unlike most states, New Jersey requires all teachers to receive feedback on their evaluations, professional development to be informed by evaluation findings and improvement plans for teachers with poor evaluation ratings.
- *Support for performance pay.* New Jersey does not support performance pay or incentives for teachers to teach in high-need schools or shortage subject areas.

The 2013 New Jersey 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