

CALIFORNIA TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS POLICIES INADEQUATE

New Report from NCTQ Finds California Falling Behind Most States in Efforts to Enact Policies that Support Effective Teaching; State Earns a Grade of “D”

December 8, 2015 (Washington, DC) — The National Council on Teacher Quality today released its ninth 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 California.

California received an overall grade of D, a grade drop from D+ in 2013. With the exception of the state’s commendable efforts to align its teaching standards with the requirements of K-12 college- and career-readiness standards, California falls behind other states

Yearbook Goal Areas	California’s 2015 Grades
Area 1: Delivering Well-Prepared Teachers	D+
Area 2: Expanding the Teacher Pool	D+
Area 3: Identifying Effective Teachers	F
Area 4: Retaining Effective Teachers	C+
Area 5: Dismissing Ineffective Teachers	F
Average Overall Grade	D

on teacher policy. The average grade across all 50 states and the District of Columbia is a C- this year.

NCTQ Senior Vice President for State and District Policy Sandi Jacobs said, "Nationwide the glass is really starting to look half full on states’ efforts to drive teacher effectiveness through smarter policy. California has not kept pace with the progress being made on teacher effectiveness policy across the country.”

California does not promote teacher effectiveness as part of the state’s preparation and licensing policies:

- *Teacher prep admission policy.* California does not set a high academic bar for admission to teacher preparation programs.
- *Elementary teacher preparation.* California’s content assessments for elementary teacher licensure do not ensure that candidates have mastered all content areas they are required to teach. However, California does require elementary teaching candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of the science of reading.
- *Secondary teacher preparation.* California is one of nine states that do not require secondary teachers to take content tests in the subjects they will be licensed to teach.
- *Middle school preparation.* California still offers a generic K-8 license and does not require middle school teachers to take content tests in the subjects they will teach.
- *Special education.* California also is one of 21 states in the nation that offer only a K-12 general license for special education teachers, a license that wrongly presumes special education teachers do not need to master grade and subject specific content knowledge.

California does not require evaluations of teacher effectiveness, policies that were found to be unconstitutional in the Vergara v. California decision last year:

- *Teacher evaluation.* California is one of only 8 states that do not require any objective measures of student achievement to be included in teacher evaluations.

- *Tenure policy.* Teachers are granted tenure virtually automatically in California after just two years without consideration of teacher performance.
- *Dismissal policy.* California also does not articulate that ineffectiveness is grounds for teacher dismissal.
- *“Last in, first out” policies.* California makes no effort to require districts to consider teacher performance (rather than only seniority) in making layoff decisions.

Teacher effectiveness also does not inform teacher practice or pay in California:

- *Professional development and support.* While California requires that teachers receive feedback on their evaluation ratings, the state does not specify that professional development should be informed by evaluations or that teachers with poor ratings must have improvement plans.
- *Performance pay.* California does not support performance pay although it does provide differential pay for teachers in high-need schools and shortage subjects.

California needs improvement on several other critical teacher policies:

- *Teacher prep accountability.* California does not connect student achievement or collect other performance data on teacher preparation programs and does not set minimum program performance standards.
- *Alternate routes.* Alternate routes are in need of significant improvement in California.

The *2015 California State Teacher Policy Yearbook* is immediately available for free download [here](#). The 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 National Council on Teacher Quality is a nonpartisan research and policy group committed to modernizing the teaching profession based on the belief that all children deserve effective teachers. We recognize that it is not teachers who bear responsibility for their profession's many challenges, but the institutions with the greatest authority and influence over teachers. To that end we work to achieve fundamental changes in the policy and practices of teacher preparation programs, school districts, state governments, and teachers unions. Our Board of Directors and Advisory Board come from a broad range of backgrounds and perspectives, and they all believe that policy changes are overdue in the recruitment and retention of teachers. More information about NCTQ can be found on our website, www.nctq.org.

	Overall State Grade 2015	Overall State Grade 2013	Overall State Grade 2011	Overall State Grade 2009
Florida	B+	B+	B	C
Indiana	B	B-	C+	D
Louisiana	B	B	C-	C-
New York	B	B-	C	D+
Tennessee	B	B	B-	C-
Arkansas	B-	B-	C	C-
Connecticut	B-	B-	C-	D+
Delaware	B-	C+	C	D
Georgia	B-	B-	C	C-
Massachusetts	B-	B-	C	D+
Ohio	B-	B-	C+	D+
Oklahoma	B-	B-	B-	D+
Rhode Island	B-	B	B-	D
Illinois	C+	C+	C	D+
Michigan	C+	B-	C+	D-
New Jersey	C+	B-	D+	D+
Utah	C+	C	C-	D
Virginia	C+	C+	D+	D+
Colorado	C	C+	C	D+
Kentucky	C	C	D+	D+
Mississippi	C	C	D+	D+
New Mexico	C	D+	D+	D+
South Carolina	C	C-	C-	C-
Arizona	C-	C-	D+	D+
Idaho	C-	D+	D+	D-
Maine	C-	C-	D-	F
Minnesota	C-	C-	C-	D-
Missouri	C-	C-	D	D
Nevada	C-	C-	C-	D-
North Carolina	C-	C	D+	D+
Pennsylvania	C-	C-	D+	D
Texas	C-	C-	C-	C-
Washington	C-	C-	C-	D+
West Virginia	C-	C-	D+	D+
Alabama	D+	C-	C-	C-
District of Columbia	D+	D+	D	D-
Hawaii	D+	D+	D-	D-
Kansas	D+	D	D	D-
Maryland	D+	D+	D+	D
California	D	D+	D+	D+
Iowa	D	D	D	D
Nebraska	D	D-	D-	D-
New Hampshire	D	D	D-	D-
North Dakota	D	D	D	D-
Oregon	D	D	D-	D-
Wisconsin	D	D+	D	D
Wyoming	D	D	D	D-
Alaska	D-	D	D	D
South Dakota	D-	D-	D	D
Vermont	D-	D-	D-	F
Montana	F	F	F	F