

CONNECTICUT TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS POLICIES STRONGER THAN MOST OTHER STATES; STATE EARNS SOLID B- GRADE

New Report From NCTQ Finds Connecticut Supports Effective Teaching

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 Connecticut.

Connecticut earned a B- this year, holding steady from 2013, despite the fact that NCTQ raised expectations in several key policy areas, including aligning teacher licensing with the requirements of states' college- and career-readiness standards. The average grade across all 50 states and the District of Columbia for 2015 is a "C-".

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

NCTQ Senior Vice President for State and District Policy Sandi Jacobs said, "Most states still have plenty of room for improvement, including Connecticut, but on the whole the glass is really starting to look half full on states' efforts to drive teacher effectiveness through smarter policy. Connecticut is among the national leaders."

Key Yearbook Findings

Teacher licensing requirements are becoming more in step with teacher effectiveness:

- *Elementary teacher preparation.* Connecticut's content tests for elementary school licensure provide separate passing scores for each subject which helps to ensure teachers know all of the core content they will teach.
- *Knowledge of the science of reading.* Connecticut requires all elementary and early childhood teachers to demonstrate their knowledge of the science of reading.
- *Middle school preparation.* Connecticut does not offer a generic K-8 license and requires middle school teachers to pass content tests in every subject they will teach.
- *Admission standards.* However, Connecticut does not require that teacher preparation programs admit candidates with strong academic records, a practice that could help ensure teacher effectiveness right from the start.

Connecticut is implementing evaluations of teacher effectiveness and using results to inform policy and practice:

- *Teacher evaluation.* Connecticut is one of 27 states that require annual evaluations for all teachers and is one of 16 states that require student achievement/growth to be the preponderant criterion in evaluating teacher effectiveness.

- *Tying performance to tenure and licensure.* Evidence of student learning is required to be the preponderant criterion for making tenure decisions in Connecticut.
- *Dismissing ineffective teachers.* Connecticut is one of 28 states that articulate that classroom ineffectiveness is grounds for a teacher's dismissal.
- *Prohibiting "last in, first out" policies.* However, Connecticut makes no effort to require districts to consider teacher performance (rather than only seniority) in making layoff decisions. Such decisions should be informed by teacher effectiveness.

Connecticut has some promising policies aimed at recruiting and retaining effective teachers:

- *Professional support.* Connecticut has strong requirements for teacher induction. In addition, Connecticut requires that all teachers receive feedback on their evaluations and directs districts to connect professional development to teachers' identified needs. The state also requires structured improvement plans for teachers who receive unsatisfactory evaluations.
- *Alternate routes.* Connecticut is one of just six states that have high-quality alternative routes into the teaching profession.

Connecticut still has room to improve on several critical teacher policy fronts:

- *Strengthening secondary teacher preparation.* Connecticut should require that all secondary teachers, including general social studies teachers, to pass a content test in every subject they are licensed or have an endorsement to teach.
- *Teacher prep accountability.* Connecticut should hold teacher preparation programs accountable by collecting performance data and setting minimum program performance standards.
- *Special education teachers.* Connecticut is one of 21 that offer only 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.
- *Support for performance pay.* Connecticut does not support performance pay or differential pay for high-need schools or shortage subject areas.

The *2015 Connecticut 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