

## **MASSACHUSETTS TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS POLICIES STRONGER THAN MOST OTHER STATES; STATE EARNS SOLID B- GRADE**

### *New Report from NCTQ Finds Massachusetts 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 Massachusetts.

Massachusetts 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 policies 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-".

NCTQ Senior Vice President for State and District Policy Sandi Jacobs said, "Most states

still have plenty of room for improvement, including Massachusetts, but on the whole the glass is really starting to look half full on states' efforts to drive teacher effectiveness through smarter policy. Massachusetts is among the national leaders."

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

### **Key Yearbook Findings**

#### **Many of Massachusetts's teacher preparation and licensing requirements are in step with teacher effectiveness:**

- *Elementary teacher preparation.* Massachusetts requires elementary teaching candidates to demonstrate their mathematics knowledge on a rigorous test. The state also requires both early childhood and elementary teachers to know the science of reading.
- *Middle school preparation.* Massachusetts does not offer a generic K-8 license.
- *Special education.* Massachusetts is one of only 14 states that, appropriately, do not offer a K-12 general license for special education teachers. The state also requires special education teachers to pass the same content tests as general education teachers.
- *Student teaching.* Massachusetts is one of 13 states that require that cooperating teachers that mentor future teachers have demonstrated that they are effective in the classroom.

#### **Massachusetts' evaluations of teacher effectiveness could be stronger but do require effectiveness to be considered in teacher policies:**

- *Teacher evaluation.* Massachusetts does not require annual evaluations for all teachers. The state requires some objective evidence of student learning to be included in evaluations, but unlike 35 other states, Massachusetts does not require student achievement/growth to be a significant criterion.

- *Tenure policy.* Massachusetts is one of 23 states that require teacher performance to be considered in tenure decisions.
- *Dismissing ineffective teachers.* Massachusetts is one of 28 states that articulate classroom ineffectiveness as grounds for a teacher's dismissal.
- *Prohibiting "last in, first out" policies.* Massachusetts requires districts to consider teacher performance (after tenure) in making layoff decisions.

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

- *Professional support.* Massachusetts 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 poor evaluations.

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

- *Admission standards.* Massachusetts does not set a high academic bar for admission to teacher preparation programs.
- *Elementary teacher preparation.* Massachusetts' content tests for elementary school licensure only provide separate passing scores for some subjects which makes it harder to ensure teachers know all of the core content they will teach.
- *Support for performance pay.* Massachusetts does not support performance pay or differential pay for teachers in high-need schools or shortage subject areas.

The *2015 Massachusetts 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 *State Teacher Policy Yearbook* is funded by private foundations across the United States, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, The Joyce Foundation and The Walton Family Foundation. NCTQ accepts no funding from the federal government.

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](http://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