

## MINNESOTA KEEPS PACE WITH OTHER STATES ON TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS POLICY OVERALL; BUT STATE EFFORTS ARE UNEVEN

### *New Report from NCTQ Finds Minnesota Could Do More to Consistently Enact Policies that Support Effective Teaching; State Earns C-*

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 Minnesota.

Minnesota received an overall grade of C-, which is the same as the average grade for 2015 across all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

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. Like most states, however, Minnesota has plenty of room for improvement."

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

### **On teacher preparation and licensing, Minnesota has more to do to ensure teachers are prepared for the demands of college- and career-readiness standards:**

- *Secondary teacher preparation.* Minnesota is one of just five states in the nation that require secondary teaching candidates to pass content tests in every subject they will be licensed to teach.
- *Elementary teacher preparation.* Minnesota's content tests for elementary school licensure do not provide separate passing scores for each subject which makes it harder to ensure teachers know all of the core content they will teach.
- *Admission requirements.* Minnesota does not require that teacher preparation programs admit candidates with strong academic records.
- *Middle school licensing.* Minnesota is one of 19 states that still offer a generalist K-8 license. Candidates for this license only need to pass elementary content tests for licensing. Candidates for this license only need to pass elementary content tests for licensing.
- *Special education.* Minnesota still offers 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.

### **Minnesota requires evaluations of teacher effectiveness but performance does not inform policy and practice:**

- *Teacher evaluation.* Minnesota is one of 35 states requiring student achievement/growth to be included as an important criterion in teacher valuations. However, the state does not require annual evaluations for all teachers.

- *Tying performance to tenure.* In Minnesota, tenure is granted to teacher virtually automatically after three years without considering teacher performance.
- *Dismissing ineffective teachers.* Minnesota does not articulate that classroom ineffectiveness is grounds for a teacher's dismissal.
- *Prohibiting "last in, first out" policies.* Minnesota does not require districts to consider teacher performance (rather than only seniority) in making layoff decisions.

### **Minnesota has plenty of room to improve on several other critical teacher policy fronts:**

- *Professional support.* Minnesota directs districts to connect professional development to teachers' identified needs and also requires structured improvement plans for teachers who receive poor evaluations. However, the state does not require that all teachers receive feedback on their evaluations.
- *Teacher prep accountability.* Minnesota collects some performance data on teacher preparation programs, but does not set any program performance standards and does not connect student achievement to teacher preparation programs.
- *Support for performance pay.* Minnesota supports performance bonuses but does not support differential pay for teachers in high-need schools or shortage subject areas.
- *Alternate routes.* Minnesota's alternate routes to certification are in need of significant improvement.

The *2015 Minnesota 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