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MONTANA EARNS NATION'S ONLY FAILING GRADE FOR TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS POLICIES

New Report from NCTQ Finds Montana Last Among the States in Enacting Policies that Support 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 Montana.

Montana received an overall grade of F. The average grade for 2015 across all 50 states and the District of Columbia is a C-.

NCTQ Senior Vice President for State and District Policy Sandi Jacobs said, "Montana is

becoming the exception to the rule on teacher effectiveness policy, and not for the better. Nationwide the glass is really starting to look half full on states' efforts to drive teacher effectiveness through smarter policy. Most states have plenty of room for improvement, but Montana has not kept pace with the progress being made on these issues across the country."

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

On teacher preparation and licensing, Montana has done little to ensure that teachers are prepared for the demands of college- and career-readiness standards:

- *Elementary teacher preparation.* Montana is one of five states that do not require elementary teacher candidates to pass any content knowledge test for initial licensure to ensure that teachers have mastered the content they are required to teach.
- *Science of reading.* Montana does not ensure elementary teachers' knowledge of effective reading instruction.
- *Secondary teacher preparation.* Montana does not require secondary teachers to pass a content test in every subject for initial licensure.
- *Special education teachers.* Montana offers 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.

Teacher effectiveness doesn't inform policy and practice in Montana:

- *Teacher evaluation.* Montana does not require annual evaluations for all teachers and is one of just eight states that do not require objective measures of student achievement to be considered in teacher evaluations.

- *Tying performance to tenure.* In Montana teachers are granted tenure virtually automatically after three years with no attention to teacher effectiveness.
- *Dismissal policy.* Montana is one of 23 states that do not articulate that teacher ineffectiveness is grounds for dismissal.
- *Prohibiting “last in, first out” policies.* Montana makes no effort to require districts to consider teacher performance (rather than only seniority) in making layoff decisions.

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

- *Support for performance pay.* Montana does not support performance pay or differential pay for teachers in high-need schools or shortage subject areas.

The *2015 Montana 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.

	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