

NEBRASKA TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS POLICIES INADEQUATE

New Report from NCTQ Finds Nebraska 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 Nebraska.

Nebraska received an overall grade of D, which is a small improvement over its grade of D- in 2013. The average grade across all 50 states and the District of Columbia for 2015 is a “C-”.

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

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. Nebraska has not kept pace with the progress being made on teacher effectiveness policy across the country."

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

- *Teacher prep admission policy.* Nebraska does not set a high academic bar for admission to teacher preparation programs.
- *Elementary teacher preparation.* Nebraska’s content assessments for elementary teacher licensure do not ensure that candidates have mastered all content areas they are required to teach.
- *Science of reading.* Neither early childhood nor elementary teaching candidates are required to demonstrate their knowledge of the science of reading in Nebraska.
- *Middle school licensing.* Nebraska is one of 19 states that still allow a generic K-8 teaching license. The state also does not require content tests for middle school teachers.
- *Secondary teacher preparation.* Nebraska has significant loopholes in its licensing requirements for secondary teachers.
- *Special education.* Nebraska 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.

Nebraska does not require evaluations of teacher effectiveness:

- *Teacher evaluation.* Nebraska does not require annual evaluations for all teachers and is one of only 8 states in the nation that does not require objective measures of student achievement to be included in teacher evaluations.
- *Tenure policy.* Teachers are granted tenure virtually automatically in Nebraska after three years without consideration of teacher performance.

- *Dismissal policy.* Nebraska also does not articulate that ineffectiveness is grounds for teacher dismissal.
- *“Last in, first out” policies.* Nebraska 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 Nebraska:

- *Professional development and support.* Nebraska does not require that teachers receive feedback on evaluations ratings and does not specify that professional development should be informed by evaluations. However, the state does specify that teachers with poor ratings should have improvement plans.
- *Performance pay.* Nebraska does not support performance pay for effective teachers or differential pay for teachers in high-need schools or shortage-subject areas.

Nebraska needs improvement on several other critical teacher policies:

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

The *2015 Nebraska 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