

SOUTH CAROLINA EARNS “C” FOR TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS POLICIES

New Report from NCTQ Finds South Carolina Could Be Doing More to 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 South Carolina.

| Yearbook Goal Areas | South Carolina'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 | C+ |
| Area 5: Dismissing Ineffective Teachers | D+ |
| Average Overall Grade | C |

South Carolina received an overall grade of a C, up from a C- in 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 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, "On the whole, the glass is really starting to look half full on states' efforts to drive teacher effectiveness through smarter policy. South Carolina has made some strides but has more work to do."

Key Yearbook Findings

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

- *Admission requirements.* South Carolina is one of 24 states that set a high academic bar for admission to teacher preparation programs.
- *Elementary teacher preparation.* South Carolina'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.

South Carolina's evaluations of teacher effectiveness could be stronger but do require effectiveness to be considered in teacher policies:

- *Teacher evaluation.* South Carolina 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, South Carolina does not require student achievement/growth to be a significant criterion.
- *Tying performance to tenure.* South is one of 23 states where evidence of teacher performance is considered in tenure decisions.
- *Use of evaluations for improving practice.* South Carolina requires that all teachers receive feedback on their evaluations, requires professional development to be informed

by evaluation findings and mandates improvement plans for teachers with poor evaluation ratings.

- *Dismissing ineffective teachers.* South Carolina does not articulate that classroom ineffectiveness is grounds for a teacher's dismissal.

South Carolina also has work to do on policies aimed at recruiting and retaining the best teachers in the profession:

- *Support for performance pay.* South Carolina does not support performance pay for effective teachers or differential pay for teachers in high-need schools or shortage-subject areas. South Carolina is also one of 15 states that still require teachers to be compensated for advanced degrees, even though such credentials have not been shown to have any bearing on teacher effectiveness.
- *Alternate routes.* Alternative pathways to certification are in need of significant improvement in South Carolina.

South Carolina has significant room for improvement on several other critical policy fronts:

- *Science of reading.* South Carolina is one of 33 states that does not administer an adequate test to ensure elementary teachers' knowledge of effective reading instruction.
- *Secondary teacher preparation.* South Carolina should require that all secondary teachers, including general science and general social studies teachers, pass a content test in every subject they are licensed or have an endorsement to teach.
- *Special education teachers.* South Carolina still offers a K-12 special education license, which wrongly presumes special education teachers do not need to master grade and subject specific content knowledge.
- *Prohibiting "last in, first out" policies.* South Carolina does not require districts to consider teacher performance in making layoff decisions.

The *2015 South Carolina 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 |