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## **SOUTH DAKOTA TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS POLICIES INADEQUATE; STATE EARNS “D-”**

### ***New Report from NCTQ Finds South Dakota Lags Behind Most 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 South Dakota.

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

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

NCTQ Senior Vice President for State and District Policy Sandi

Jacobs said, "South Dakota 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 South Dakota has not kept pace with the progress being made on these issues across the country."

### **Except for secondary teacher licensing, South Dakota has done little to ensure that all teachers are prepared for the demands of college- and career-readiness standards:**

- *Secondary teacher preparation.* South Dakota is one of just 5 states in the nation that requires secondary teachers to pass a content test in each and every subject for initial licensure.
- *Elementary teacher preparation.* However, South Dakota does not ensure that content knowledge tests for initial licensure demonstrate that teachers have mastered the subject matter they are required to teach. South Dakota also does not test elementary teachers' knowledge of effective reading instruction.
- *Admission requirements.* South Dakota does not ensure that teacher preparation programs admit candidates with strong academic records. The state has no requirements for candidates to demonstrate academic proficiency, such as a minimum GPA requirement.
- *Special education teachers.* South Dakota offers 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 South Dakota:**

- *Teacher evaluation.* South Dakota requires student achievement/growth to be included as the preponderant criterion in teacher evaluations but the state doesn't require annual evaluations and doesn't connect teacher evaluation to any policies of consequence.
- *Tying performance to tenure.* In South Dakota, teachers are granted tenure virtually automatically after three years with no attention to teacher effectiveness.
- *Dismissal policy.* South Dakota does not articulate that teacher ineffectiveness is grounds for dismissal.
- *Prohibiting "last in, first out" policies.* South Dakota 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 South Dakota:**

- *Use of evaluations for improving practice.* South Dakota requires that teachers receive feedback on their evaluation ratings and that professional development should be informed by evaluations
- *Support for performance pay.* However, South Dakota does not support performance pay or differential pay for teachers in high-need schools or shortage subject areas.
- *Alternate routes.* South Dakota's alternative pathways to teacher certification are in need of significant improvement.

The *2015 South Dakota 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