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TENNESSEE EARNS B GRADE FOR TEACHER POLICIES IN NEW EDITION OF NATIONAL YEARBOOK

STATE DEMONSTRATES NO CHANGE IN OVERALL GRADE FOR ITS STATE TEACHER POLICIES TO IMPROVE TEACHER QUALITY SINCE 2015

Washington, DC--Today, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) released its bi-annual *2017 State Teacher Policy Yearbook*, finding that states' previous rapid progress to modernize their teacher policies has largely slowed. Tennessee's overall grade for its teaching policies remained at a B, the same grade it earned in the *2015 State Teacher Policy Yearbook*. By comparison, the overall grade nationally remained unchanged between 2015 and 2017, staying at a C- grade.

From 2007 until 2015, most states took aggressive steps to improve the teaching profession. However, since the last edition of the Yearbook in 2015, few states have initiated any new actions to improve their policies guiding how teachers are selected, prepared, evaluated, and retained. As a result, state grades have mostly stagnated, with more state grades decreasing than at any other time in the *Yearbook's* history.

This year, among all 50 states and the District of Columbia, two states earned a higher grade than Tennessee, three states performed as well as Tennessee, and 45 states earned a lower grade. Florida and Louisiana both earned B+ grades, the highest in this year's *Yearbook*.

"States' teacher policies have an enormous impact on the quality of education in the state," said Elizabeth Ross, Managing Director of State Policy at NCTQ. "By highlighting opportunities for improvement, as well as strong policies, this Yearbook is designed to catalyze state action. We know the progress states are capable of making and urge them to do so. Teachers and students deserve nothing less."

Tennessee has a couple of key opportunities for growth. In the 2017 *Yearbook*, NCTQ reported that the state earned a D- for its policies related to Alternate Route Certification, and a D for its policies related to Elementary Teacher Preparation.

Tennessee earned its highest grade for its policies related to General Teacher Preparation, where the state earned an A-, the highest grade of any state in this area. Tennessee earned the *Yearbook's* "Best Practice" designation in two areas related to General Teacher Preparation:

- Program Reporting Requirements, where the state holds teacher preparation programs accountable for meeting performance standards and for the quality of teachers they provide; and,
- Student Teaching, where the state requires that mentor teachers be selected based on evidence of effectiveness and that the clinical practice experience be at least 10 weeks, full time, and take place in the setting of the license sought (e.g., grades, subjects).

The full *2017 State Teacher Policy Yearbook* is available [here](#), with comprehensive information regarding each state's teacher policies available in NCTQ's [State Teacher Policy Database](#).

To compare Tennessee to other states across the country in eight key measures, including teacher pay, teacher diversity, and educator equity, please look [here](#).

For more information, or to arrange an interview with Elizabeth Ross, please contact Eric Duncan at eduncan@nctq.org.

The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) is a nonpartisan research and policy group, committed to modernizing the teaching profession and based on the belief that all children deserve effective teachers. NCTQ is the nation's expert on the quality of teacher preparation programs and evaluates national teacher education against evidence-based criteria. More information about NCTQ can be found on our website, www.nctq.org

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