

## UTAH EARNS “C+” FOR TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS POLICIES

### *New Report from NCTQ Finds Utah Ahead of Most States But 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 Utah.

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

Utah received an overall grade of 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. Like most states, Utah 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.* Utah is one of 24 states that set a high academic bar for admission to teacher preparation programs.
- *Elementary teacher preparation.* Utah’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.

#### **Utah evaluations of teacher effectiveness could be stronger but do require effectiveness to be considered in teacher policies:**

- *Teacher evaluation.* Utah is one of 27 states that require annual evaluations for all teachers. However, it is one of 16 states that do not require student achievement/growth to be an important criterion in evaluating teacher effectiveness.
- *Tying performance to tenure.* Utah is one of 26 states where tenure is earned virtually automatically and evidence of teacher performance is not considered in tenure decisions.

- *Use of evaluations for improving practice.* Utah 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.* Utah does not articulate that classroom ineffectiveness is grounds for a teacher's dismissal.
- *Support for performance pay.* Utah is one of three states in the nation that requires districts to weigh performance in teacher salary structures more heavily than advanced degrees.
- *Prohibiting "last in, first out" policies.* Utah requires districts to consider teacher performance in making layoff decisions.

**Utah has significant room for improvement on several other critical policy fronts:**

- *Science of reading.* Utah is one of 33 states that do not administer an adequate test to ensure elementary teachers' knowledge of effective reading instruction.
- *Secondary teacher preparation.* Utah should require that all secondary teachers, including general science and social studies teachers, pass a content test in every subject they are licensed or have an endorsement to teach.
- *Special education teachers.* Utah 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.
- *Alternate routes.* Alternative pathways to certification are in need of significant improvement in Utah.

The *2015 Utah 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](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