

WASHINGTON KEEPS PACE WITH OTHER STATES ON TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS POLICY OVERALL; BUT STATE EFFORTS ARE UNEVEN

New Report from NCTQ Finds Washington Could Do More to Consistently Enact Policies that Support Effective Teaching; State Earns C-

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 Washington.

Washington received an overall grade of C-, which is the same as the average grade for 2015 across all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

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. Like most states, however, Washington has plenty of room for improvement."

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

On teacher preparation and licensing, Washington doesn't ensure teachers are prepared for the demands of college- and career-readiness standards:

- *Admission requirements.* Washington does not require that teacher preparation programs admit candidates with strong academic records.
- *Elementary teacher preparation.* Washington's content tests for elementary school licensure do not provide separate passing scores for each subject, which makes it difficult to ensure teachers know all of the core content they will teach.
- *Middle school licensing.* Washington offers a generalist K-8 license and only requires middle school teachers to pass elementary content tests under such a license.
- *Special education.* Washington is one of 21 states that offer only 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.
- *Science of reading.* Washington does not require early childhood or elementary teachers to demonstrate knowledge of effective reading instruction.
- *Secondary teacher preparation.* Washington is one of just nine states that does not require content testing in for all secondary teachers.

While Washington ties teacher performance to policy and practice, it does not require evaluations that are significantly informed by teacher effectiveness:

- *Teacher evaluation.* Washington requires annual evaluations but only requires some objective measures of student achievement/growth to be included.
- *Dismissing ineffective teachers.* Washington articulates that classroom ineffectiveness is grounds for a teacher's dismissal.

- *Tying performance to tenure.* Washington is one of 23 states where some evidence of teacher performance is needed to inform tenure decisions.
- *Prohibiting “last in, first out” policies.* Washington also requires districts to consider teacher performance (rather than only seniority) in making layoff decisions.

Washington has plenty of room to improve on other several critical teacher policy fronts:

- *Professional support.* While Washington requires that all teachers receive feedback on their evaluations requires, and requires that teachers with poor ratings have improvement plans, the state does not require evaluations to inform professional development for all teachers.
- *Teacher prep accountability.* Washington collects some performance data on teacher preparation programs but does not set minimum program performance standards or connect student achievement to teacher preparation programs.
- *Support for performance pay.* Washington does not support performance pay but does support differential pay for high-needs schools and shortage subject areas. Unfortunately, Washington is also one of 15 states in the nation that still require additional pay for teachers with advanced degrees, despite the fact that research does not show that advanced degrees have an impact on teacher effectiveness.
- *Alternate routes.* Washington’s alternate routes are in need of significant improvement.

The *2015 Washington 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