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IDAHO EARNS “D+” FOR TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS POLICIES

New report from the National Council on Teacher Quality gives Idaho poor grades for lack of policies that support effective teaching

January 30, 2014 (Washington, DC) — The National Council on Teacher Quality today released its seventh 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 Idaho.

Idaho has consistently earned low grades in the *Yearbook*. The average grade across all 50 states and the District of Columbia in 2013 is an improving “C-”.

NCTQ President Kate Walsh said, "This year's *State Teacher Policy Yearbook* proves that it is both possible and practical for states to drive teacher effectiveness policy. Many states once argued that raising the bar for teacher preparation, licensing and evaluation and tying personnel decisions to results for kids couldn't be done. Now these policies are on the books in increasing numbers of states across the nation."

Key Yearbook Findings

Teacher effectiveness is increasingly being factored into personnel decisions across the states:

- *Teacher evaluation.* Idaho is one of 28 states that requires annual evaluations for all teachers but is one of just 10 states in the nation that does not require objective measures of student achievement to be included in evaluations of teacher effectiveness.
- *Dismissing ineffective teachers.* Twenty-nine states, including Idaho, now articulate that classroom ineffectiveness is grounds for a teacher's dismissal.
- *Tying performance to tenure.* In Idaho, however, teachers are granted tenure virtually automatically after three years with no attention to teacher effectiveness.
- *Prohibiting “last in, first out” policies.* Idaho does not consider teacher performance in making layoff decisions. However, the state does specify that seniority cannot be the only factor.

In many states, progress is being made in setting higher standards for the preparation of teachers, but there is still a long way to go:

- *Elementary teacher preparation.* Idaho'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.

Yearbook Goal Areas	Idaho's 2013 Grades
Area 1: Delivering Well-Prepared Teachers	D+
Area 2: Expanding the Teacher Pool	D
Area 3: Identifying Effective Teachers	C-
Area 4: Retaining Effective Teachers	D-
Area 5: Dismissing Ineffective Teachers	D
Average Overall Grade	D+

- *Science of reading.* Idaho's teacher preparation requirements articulate that teachers should know the science of reading; however the state does not have a rigorous test of scientifically-based reading knowledge for all elementary teachers.
- *Admission requirements.* Nearly all states set a low academic bar but Idaho sets no such bar for admission to teacher preparation programs. The state has no requirements for candidates to demonstrate academic proficiency, such as a test or minimum GPA requirement.
- *Strengthening secondary teacher preparation.* Idaho has significant loopholes in its secondary teacher licensing requirements. Arkansas should require that all secondary teachers pass a content test in every subject they are licensed or have an endorsement to teach.
- *Special education teachers.* Idaho offers only 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.

There has been little action on policies aimed at recruiting and retaining the best teachers in the profession across the states:

- *Use of evaluations for improving practice.* Idaho does not require that all teachers to receive feedback on their evaluations, does not require professional development to be informed by evaluation findings, and does not mandate improvement plans for teachers with poor evaluation ratings.
- *Support for performance pay.* Idaho is one of 26 states that does not support performance pay and does not support differential pay for teachers in high-need schools or shortage subject areas.
- *Pay for advanced degrees.* Unfortunately, Idaho is one of 15 states that requires teachers to be compensated for earning advanced degrees shown to have little or no impact on student achievement.

Very few states provide truly flexible pathways into teaching:

- *Alternate routes.* Idaho fails to provide alternative pathways to teacher certification that are flexible, efficient, and permit both broad usage and a diversity of providers.

The *2013 Idaho State Teacher Policy Yearbook* is immediately available for free download at: www.nctq.org/statepolicy. The newly redesigned 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.

The *State Teacher Policy Yearbook* was funded by private foundations across the United States, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, The Joyce Foundation and The Walton Family Foundation. NCTQ accepts no funding from the federal government. The National Council of Teacher Quality— comprised of reform-minded Democrats, Republicans, and Independents— is a non-partisan research and policy group committed to restructuring the teaching profession based on the belief that all children deserve effective teachers. More information about NCTQ, including a list of the Board of Directors and Advisory Board, can be found on the NCTQ website, www.nctq.org

	Overall State Grade 2013	Overall State Grade 2011	Overall State Grade 2009
Florida	B+	B	C
Louisiana	B	C-	C-
Rhode Island	B	B-	D
Tennessee	B	B-	C-
Arkansas	B-	C	C-
Connecticut	B-	C-	D+
Georgia	B-	C	C-
Indiana	B-	C+	D
Massachusetts	B-	C	D+
Michigan	B-	C+	D-
New Jersey	B-	D+	D+
New York	B-	C	D+
Ohio	B-	C+	D+
Oklahoma	B-	B-	D+
Colorado	C+	C	D+
Delaware	C+	C	D
Illinois	C+	C	D+
Virginia	C+	D+	D+
Kentucky	C	D+	D+
Mississippi	C	D+	D+
North Carolina	C	D+	D+
Utah	C	C-	D
Alabama	C-	C-	C-
Arizona	C-	D+	D+
Maine	C-	D-	F
Minnesota	C-	C-	D-
Missouri	C-	D	D
Nevada	C-	C-	D-
Pennsylvania	C-	D+	D
South Carolina	C-	C-	C-
Texas	C-	C-	C-
Washington	C-	C-	D+
West Virginia	C-	D+	D+
California	D+	D+	D+
District of Columbia	D+	D	D-
Hawaii	D+	D-	D-
Idaho	D+	D+	D-
Maryland	D+	D+	D
New Mexico	D+	D+	D+
Wisconsin	D+	D	D
Alaska	D	D	D
Iowa	D	D	D
Kansas	D	D	D-
New Hampshire	D	D-	D-
North Dakota	D	D	D-
Oregon	D	D-	D-
Wyoming	D	D	D-
Nebraska	D-	D-	D-
South Dakota	D-	D	D
Vermont	D-	D-	F
Montana	F	F	F