

January 30, 2014

Contact: Maegan Rees
Phone 202.393.0020 ext. 117
mrees@nctq.org

MONTANA EARNS “F” FOR TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS POLICIES

New report from the National Council on Teacher Quality gives Montana failing 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 Montana.

Montana has consistently earned failing grades in the *Yearbook*, while the average grade across all 50 states and the District of Columbia 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, but not in Montana:

- *Teacher evaluation.* Montana is one of only 10 states in the nation with no policies requiring that teacher evaluations take objective evidence of student achievement/growth into account when evaluating teacher effectiveness.
- *Tying performance to tenure.* In Montana, teachers are granted tenure virtually automatically after three years with no attention to teacher effectiveness.
- *Dismissing ineffective teachers.* Montana is one of 22 states that does not articulate that classroom ineffectiveness is grounds for a teacher's dismissal.
- *Prohibiting “last in, first out” policies.* Montana makes no effort to require districts to consider teacher performance (rather than only seniority) in making layoff decisions.

In many states, progress is being made in setting higher standards for the preparation of teachers, but Montana still does little in this area:

- *Elementary teacher preparation.* Montana is one of only four states in the nation that does not require teachers to pass any tests demonstrating content knowledge as part of elementary school licensure.

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

- *Admission requirements.* Montana does not ensure that teacher preparation programs admit candidates with strong academic records. Nearly all states set a low academic bar but Montana sets no such bar for admission to teacher preparation programs. The state has no requirements for candidates to demonstrate academic proficiency, such as a minimum GPA requirement.
- *Science of reading.* Montana is one of 34 states that does not ensure elementary teachers' knowledge of effective reading instruction.
- *Secondary teacher preparation.* Montana is one of just 9 states that does not require secondary teachers to pass a content test in every subject they are licensed or have an endorsement to teach.
- *Special education teachers.* Montana is one of 28 states that 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.* Montana does not require teachers to receive feedback on their evaluations. The state also fails to specify that professional development should be informed by evaluations or require improvement plans for teachers with poor evaluating ratings.
- *Support for performance pay.* Montana is one of 26 states that does not support performance pay.

Very few states provide truly flexible pathways into teaching:

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

The *2013 Montana 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