

2011 State Teacher Policy Yearbook

Kansas

OVERALL GRADE

D



National Council on Teacher Quality

Acknowledgments

STATES

State education agencies remain our most important partners in this effort, and their gracious cooperation has helped to ensure the factual accuracy of the final product. Every state formally received a draft of the *Yearbook* in July 2011 for comment and correction; states also received a final draft of their reports a month prior to release. All but one state responded to our inquiries. While states do not always agree with the recommendations, their willingness to acknowledge the imperfections of their teacher policies is an important first step toward reform.

We also thank the many state pension boards that reviewed our drafts and responded to our inquiries.

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National Council on Teacher Quality

Executive Summary

For five years running, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) has tracked states' teacher policies, preparing a detailed and thorough compendium of teacher policy in the United States on topics related to teacher preparation, licensure, evaluation, career advancement, tenure, compensation, pensions and dismissal.

The *2011 State Teacher Policy Yearbook* includes NCTQ's biennial, full review of the state laws, rules and regulations that govern the teaching profession. This year's report measures state progress against a set of 36 policy goals focused on helping states put in place a comprehensive framework in support of preparing, retaining and rewarding effective teachers. For the first time, the *Yearbook* includes a progress rating for states on goals that have been measured over time. An overall progress ranking is also included, showing how states compare to each other in moving forward on their teacher policies.

Kansas at a Glance

Overall 2011 Yearbook Grade:

D

Overall 2009 Yearbook Grade: D-

Area Grades	2011	2009
Area 1 <i>Delivering Well Prepared Teachers</i>	D+	D+
Area 2 <i>Expanding the Teaching Pool</i>	D	F
Area 3 <i>Identifying Effective Teachers</i>	D+	D
Area 4 <i>Retaining Effective Teachers</i>	D+	C-
Area 5 <i>Exiting Ineffective Teachers</i>	F	F

Overall Progress

Progress ranking among states

31st

Amount of progress compared to other states

Low

Highlights from recent progress in Kansas include:

- State data system with the capacity to provide evidence of teacher effectiveness

How is Kansas Faring?

Area 1 Delivering Well Prepared Teachers

D+

Policy Strengths

- Middle school teachers may not teach on a K-8 generalist license, and they must appropriately pass a single-subject content test.
- All new teachers must pass a pedagogy test.

Policy Weaknesses

- Teacher candidates are not required to pass a test of academic proficiency as a criterion for admission to teacher preparation programs.
- Elementary teachers are not adequately prepared to teach the rigorous content associated with the Common Core Standards.
- Teacher preparation programs are not required to address the science of reading, and candidates are not required to pass a test to ensure knowledge.
- Neither teacher preparation program nor licensure test requirements ensure that new elementary teachers are adequately prepared to teach mathematics.
- Although most secondary teachers must pass a content test to teach a core subject area, some secondary social studies teachers are not required to pass content tests for each discipline they intend to teach.
- The state offers a K-12 special education certification.
- There are no requirements to ensure that student teachers are placed with cooperating teachers who were selected based on evidence of effectiveness.
- The teacher preparation program approval process does not hold programs accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.

Area 2 Expanding the Pool of Teachers

D

Policy Strengths

- Admission criteria for the alternate route to certification are selective, although they lack flexibility for nontraditional candidates.

Policy Weaknesses

- Alternate route preparation is not streamlined or geared toward the immediate needs of new teachers.
- Usage and providers of the alternate route are restricted.
- The state offers a license with minimal requirements that would allow content experts to teach part time, but its intent is not clear.
- Out-of-state teachers are not required to meet the state's testing requirements, and there are additional obstacles that do not support licensure reciprocity.

Area 3 Identifying Effective Teachers

D+

Policy Strengths

- The state data system has the capacity to provide evidence of teacher effectiveness.

Policy Weaknesses

- Objective evidence of student learning is not the preponderant criterion of teacher evaluations.
- Annual evaluations for all teachers are not required.
- Tenure decisions are not connected to evidence of teacher effectiveness.
- Licensure advancement and renewal are not based on teacher effectiveness.
- Little school-level data are reported that can help support the equitable distribution of teacher talent.

Area 4 Retaining Effective Teachers

D+

Policy Strengths

- All new teachers receive mentoring.

- Districts are given full authority for how teachers are paid, although they are not discouraged from basing salary schedules solely on years of experience and advanced degrees.

Policy Weaknesses

- The state could do more to ensure that professional development is aligned with findings from teachers' evaluations.
- The state does not support performance pay or additional compensation for relevant prior work experience, working in high-need schools or teaching in shortage subject areas.
- Teachers are only offered a defined benefit pension plan, and pension policies are not portable, flexible or fair to all teachers.
- The pension system is significantly underfunded and requires excessive contributions.
- Retirement benefits are determined by a formula that is not neutral, meaning that pension wealth does not accumulate uniformly for each year a teacher works.

Area 5 Exiting Ineffective Teachers

F

Policy Strengths

Policy Weaknesses

- Teachers can teach for up to two years before having to pass required subject-matter tests.
- There is no assurance that teachers who receive unsatisfactory evaluations will be placed on structured improvement plans or that they will be eligible for dismissal if they fail to improve.
- Ineffective classroom performance is not grounds for dismissal, and tenured teachers who are dismissed have multiple opportunities to appeal.
- Performance is not considered in determining which teachers to lay off during reductions in force.

Kansas Goal Summary

Goal Breakdown

★ Best Practice	0
● Fully Meets	4
◐ Nearly Meets	2
◑ Partially Meets	7
◒ Only Meets a Small Part	9
○ Does Not Meet	14

Progress on Goals Since 2009

3
 1
 25
 NEW GOAL 7

Area 1: Delivering Well Prepared Teachers

1-A: Admission into Preparation Programs	◑
1-B: Elementary Teacher Preparation	◐
1-C: Teacher Preparation in Reading Instruction	◑
1-D: Teacher Preparation in Mathematics	◐
1-E: Middle School Teacher Preparation	◐
1-F: Secondary Teacher Preparation	●
1-G: Secondary Teacher Preparation in Science	●
1-H: Secondary Teacher Preparation in Social Studies	◐
1-I: Special Education Teacher Preparation	◐
1-J: Assessing Professional Knowledge	●
1-K: Student Teaching	◐
1-L: Teacher Preparation Program Accountability	◑

Area 2: Expanding the Pool of Teachers

2-A: Alternate Route Eligibility	◐
2-B: Alternate Route Preparation	◐
2-C: Alternate Route Usage and Providers	◑
2-D: Part Time Teaching Licenses	◐
2-E: Licensure Reciprocity	◑

Area 3: Identifying Effective Teachers

3-A: State Data Systems	●
3-B: Evaluation of Effectiveness	◐
3-C: Frequency of Evaluations	◐
3-D: Tenure	◑
3-E: Licensure Advancement	◑
3-F: Equitable Distribution	◐

Area 4: Retaining Effective Teachers

4-A: Induction	◐
4-B: Professional Development	◐
4-C: Pay Scales	◐
4-D: Compensation for Prior Work Experience	◑
4-E: Differential Pay	◑
4-F: Performance Pay	◑
4-G: Pension Flexibility	◐
4-H: Pension Sustainability	◐
4-I: Pension Neutrality	◐

Area 5: Exiting Ineffective Teachers

5-A: Licensure Loopholes	◑
5-B: Unsatisfactory Evaluations	◑
5-C: Dismissal for Poor Performance	◑
5-D: Reductions in Force	◑

About the *Yearbook*

The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) has long argued that no educational improvement strategies states take on are likely to have a greater impact than policies that seek to maximize teacher effectiveness. In this fifth edition of the *State Teacher Policy Yearbook*, NCTQ provides a detailed examination of state laws, rules and regulations that govern the teaching profession, covering the full breadth of policies including teacher preparation, licensure, evaluation, career advancement, tenure, compensation, pensions and dismissal.

The *Yearbook* is a 52-volume compendium of customized state reports for the 50 states and the District of Columbia, as well as a national summary overview, measuring state progress against a set of 36 specific policy goals. All of the reports are available from NCTQ's website at www.nctq.org/stpy.

The 36 *Yearbook* goals are focused on helping states put in place a comprehensive policy framework in support of preparing, retaining and rewarding effective teachers. The goals were developed based on input and ongoing feedback from state officials, practitioners, policy groups and other education organizations, as well as from NCTQ's own nationally respected advisory board. These goals meet five criteria for an effective reform framework:

1. They are supported by a strong rationale, grounded in the best research available. The rationale and research citations supporting each goal can be found at www.nctq.org/stpy.
2. They offer practical rather than pie-in-the-sky solutions for improving teacher quality.
3. They take on the teaching profession's most pressing needs, including making the profession more responsive to the current labor market.
4. They are, for the most part, relatively cost neutral.
5. They respect the legitimate constraints that some states face so that the goals can work in all 50 states.

The need to ensure that all children have effective teachers has captured the attention of the public and policymakers across the country like never before. The *Yearbook* offers state school chiefs, school boards, legislatures and the many advocates who press hard for reform a concrete set of recommendations as they work to maximize teacher quality for their students.

How to Read the Yearbook


NCTQ rates state teacher policy in several ways.

For each of the 36 individual teacher policy goals, states receive two ratings. The first rating indicates whether, or to what extent, a state has met the goal. NCTQ uses these familiar graphics to indicate the extent to which each goal has been met:



A new feature of this year's *Yearbook* is a progress rating for each goal NCTQ has measured over time. These ratings are intended to give states a meaningful sense of the changes in teacher policy since the 2009 *Yearbook* was published. Using the symbols below, NCTQ determines whether each state has advanced on the goal, if the state policy has remained unchanged, or if the state has actually lost ground on that topic.



Some goals are marked with this symbol , which indicates that the bar has been raised for this goal since the 2009 *Yearbook*. With many states making considerable progress in advancing teacher effectiveness policy, NCTQ raised the standards for some goals where the bar had been quite low. As this may have a negative impact on some states' scores, those goals are always marked with the above symbol.

States receive grades in the five goal areas under which the 36 goals are organized: 1) delivering well prepared teachers; 2) expanding the pool of teachers; 3) identifying effective teachers; 4) retaining effective teachers and 5) exiting ineffective teachers. States also receive an overall grade that summarizes state performance across the five goal areas, giving an overall perspective on how states measure up against NCTQ benchmarks. New this year, states also receive an overall progress ranking, indicating how much progress each state has made compared to other states.

As always, the *Yearbook* provides a detailed narrative accounting of the policy strengths and weaknesses in each policy area for each state and for the nation as a whole. Best practices are highlighted. The reports are also chock full of reader-friendly charts and tables that provide a national perspective on each goal and serve as a quick reference on how states perform relative to one another, goal by goal.

Another new feature this year makes it easier to distinguish strong policies from weaker ones on our charts and tables. The policies NCTQ considers strong practices or the ideal policy positions for states are capitalized. This provides a quick thumbnail for readers to size up state policies against the policy option that aligns with NCTQ benchmarks for meeting each policy goal. For example, on the chart below, "BEFORE ADMISSION TO PREP PROGRAM" is capitalized, as that is the optimal timing for testing teacher candidates' academic proficiency.

