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Teacher tenure is a hot topic among educators, taxpayers

Many professionals who are pursuing [educational leadership](#) jobs are keeping an eye on reform proposals from state and local government officials.

Some lawmakers are attempting to overhaul the methods in which teachers are rewarded. For example, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie recently announced his plans to eliminate tenure, which guarantees permanent employment for certain teachers until they retire. In an interview with The Wall Street Journal, Christie said he favors a system through which public school districts administer five-year contracts, then award extensions based on merit.

Students who are working toward a master's of education degree may consider researching their respective state or district's policies on teacher tenure. In an attempt to foster healthy debate on the issues, the nonprofit website ProCon.org has launched a website dedicated to tenure. The site features a list of pro and con arguments, a detailed background of the policy, a video gallery and a Did You Know? section.

Many supporters of teacher tenure argue that it protects professionals from being dismissed for personal or political reasons, and it prevents the firing of higher-paid educators to hire less-expensive faculty members. Some opponents of the policy say that it allows poorly performing teachers to remain employed, and it promotes complacency among leaders who have no fear of losing their jobs.

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