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ARIZONA RECEIVES DISMAL MARKS FOR ITS TEACHER POLICIES IN NEW REPORT LABELED 'UNSATISFACTORY'

--Today the National Council on Teacher Quality released a 50-state encyclopedia on all states' teacher policies, concluding that Arizona's teacher policies are counterproductive to the nation's teacher quality goals—

Washington, DC -- The *State Teacher Policy Yearbook 2007* is the first project of its kind to provide a 360-degree detailed analysis of how states are hurting or helping teacher quality-- and what they can do to fix broken and anachronistic policies.

While Arizona's ranking falls in the middle of all states, all states performed poorly. Across six areas of teacher policy from recruitment to compensation, Arizona earned three "C" grades, two "D" grades and an "F" grade.

"Arizona's policies, like all states, are in need of a massive overhaul," said Kate Walsh, president of NCTQ. "It's time to turn in the gas-guzzling clunker in exchange for the hybrid."

Among the findings:

- Arizona neglects the preparation of special education teachers, failing to ensure that these teachers are prepared to teach students with disabilities.
- The state pays little attention to the content preparation of elementary teachers, failing to lay out the specific knowledge needed to teach in the elementary classroom. The state has no specific requirements in any of the core subjects such as American history that elementary teachers need to know.
- State licensing rules do not accommodate knowledgeable, qualified individuals who may want to switch careers to go into teaching.

Despite the overall bleak findings, there are some bright spots. For example, Arizona is one of a few states that requires all teachers to be evaluated on an annual basis.

To download copies of the Arizona report, which includes national comparisons, or to purchase printed copies of the report, visit the NCTQ website, www.nctq.org. For questions about the report, please contact Lisa Cohen at (310) 395-2544 or lisa@lisacohen.org or Molly Jackman at (202) 393-0020 (ext. 15) or mjackman@nctq.org.

NCTQ -- comprised of reform-minded Democrats, Republicans, and Independents -- advocates for reforms in a broad range of teacher policies and seeks to lend transparency and accountability to the three institutions that have the greatest impact on teacher quality: state governments, colleges of education, and teachers' unions.

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