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CALIFORNIA RECEIVES LOW MARKS FOR TEACHER POLICIES IN NEW REPORT— LABELED ‘IN NEED OF SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT’

—Today the National Council on Teacher Quality released a 50-state encyclopedia on states’ teacher policies, concluding that while California takes a leadership role in some areas, many 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 California ranks in the upper half of all states, its overall performance was still quite low. In the six areas of teacher policy assessed—ranging from teacher admissions standards to compensation—the state earned three “C” grades and three “D” grades.

“As is true for all states, California’s approach to the teaching profession needs an overhaul,” said Kate Walsh, president of NCTQ. “Unlike many states, California does appear to recognize this need and is showing signs of changing.”

Among the findings:

- The state does not require that schools evaluate teachers every year nor does it require that a teacher’s classroom effectiveness be the preponderant consideration of an evaluation.
- The state has poor oversight of ed schools, basing its approval of ed schools on outdated criteria instead of on objective evidence that the school consistently produces qualified teachers.
- The state neglects the preparation of special education teachers, failing to ensure that these teachers are prepared to teach students with disabilities.

Despite these findings, California also has some bright spots. Among its strengths, California stands out for its strong standards for elementary teacher preparation, an area many states neglect. It also has an initiative to support higher pay for teachers who teach shortage subjects.

To download copies of the California 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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