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Contact: Lisa Cohen
310.395.2544
or Molly Jackman
202-393-0020 ext 15

GEORGIA GETS MEDIOCRE MARKS FOR TEACHER POLICIES IN NEW REPORT— LABELED ‘WEAK BUT PROGRESSING’

—Today the National Council on Teacher Quality released a 50-state encyclopedia analyzing states’ teacher policies, concluding that while Georgia 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* 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 Georgia did better than most states, its overall performance shows how much work is still ahead. In the six areas of teacher policy reviewed, Georgia earned mixed grades of one B, three C’s, one D, and one F.

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

Among the findings:

- Georgia could do a better job of reporting information to the public about the distribution of highly qualified teachers among schools.
- The state prevents districts from experimenting with new ways of compensating teachers because of a rigid statewide salary schedule.
- The state’s oversight of education schools is lax. Georgia does little to monitor the quality of students going in and the quality of teachers coming out of these programs.

Despite these findings, Georgia has some bright spots. Among its strengths, the state makes it relatively easy for teachers from other states to obtain a Georgia teaching license. The state is especially accommodating to individuals who want to change careers and enter teaching. Unlike many states, it requires all teachers to get evaluated every year.

To download copies of the Georgia 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 (X 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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