

Embargoed until:
12:01 AM
June 27, 2007

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

MINNESOTA GETS FAILING MARKS FOR TEACHER POLICIES IN NEW REPORT-- LABELED 'LAST IN CLASS'

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

Minnesota ranks among the very bottom of all states and the District of Columbia.

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.

In the six areas of teacher policy assessed—ranging from teacher admissions standards, licensure to compensation reform—Minnesota received no grade higher than D.

“Minnesota'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:

- Minnesota has some of the poorest standards in the nation regarding the preparation of special education teachers, failing to ensure that these teachers are prepared to teach students with disabilities.
- State licensing rules fail to provide a genuine route into the classroom for knowledgeable, talented college graduates who want to switch careers.
- The state needs to tighten its lax oversight of its education schools; Minnesota does little to monitor the quality of students going in and the quality of teachers coming out of these programs.

Despite the overall bleak findings, there are some bright spots. For example, Minnesota stands out for its innovative performance pay plan.

To download copies of the Minnesota 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.

Funding for the State Teacher Policy Yearbook was provided by many private foundations, including the Achelis and Bodman Foundations, Bradley Foundation, Daniels Fund, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, Gleason Foundation, Joyce Foundation, IBM Foundation, Koret Foundation, Martha Holden Jennings Foundation, Milken Family Foundation, and Thomas B. Fordham Foundation. NCTQ accepts no government funding.