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SOUTH CAROLINA GETS MEDIOCRE MARKS FOR TEACHER POLICIES IN NEW REPORT-- LABELLED AS 'WEAK BUT PROGRESSING'

–Today the National Council on Teacher Quality released a 50-state encyclopedia on states' teacher policies, concluding that while South Carolina 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 South Carolina did better than most states, its overall performance shows how much work is still ahead. In the six areas of teacher policy reviewed,—ranging from teacher admissions standards, licensure to compensation reform—the state earned mixed marks of one “B” grade, three “C” grades, one “D” grade, and one “F” grade.

“South Carolina’s policies, like those in 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:

- South Carolina is neglecting the preparation of its special education teachers. It is doing very little to ensure that special education teachers are well-trained to work with special needs students.
- The state also is not doing a good job of ensuring that elementary teachers have the broad liberal arts background they need to be effective in the classroom.
- The state does not offer non-traditional candidates, such as career changers, an adequate route for teacher certification.

Despite these bleak findings, South Carolina is a leader among the states in its efforts to ensure that

highly qualified teachers are equitably distributed among high- and low-poverty schools, and does a good job of reporting information about its teachers to the general public.

To download copies of the South Carolina 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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