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**—TEXAS TEACHER POLICIES EARN HIGH RANKING
BUT STILL GET MEDIOCRE MARKS
IN NEW REPORT—**

--Today the National Council on Teacher Quality released a 50-state encyclopedia on states' teacher policies, concluding that while Texas takes a leadership role, some 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.

Although Texas is in an elite group of four states, its overall performance shows how much work is still ahead. In the six areas of teacher policy reviewed, the state earned mixed grades of one B, four Cs, and one D.

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

Among the findings:

- Texas allows teachers who do not pass required state licensing tests to keep their jobs--for up to three years. Nor do teacher candidates entering an education program have to pass a basic skills test.
- The state does not offer non-traditional candidates, such as career changers, adequate routes for teacher certification. Low admissions standards for such programs do little to ensure teacher quality.
- The state could do a better job of evaluating teachers. Texas allows districts to exempt teachers from annual formal evaluations if they receive satisfactory ratings.

Texas’ teaching standards are among the best in the country. They clearly define what teachers should know and are aligned with a pedagogy test required of new teachers.

To download copies of the Texas 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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