

June 27, 2007

Contact: Lisa Cohen
310.395.2544
or Molly Jackman
202.393.0020 ext. 15

**WEST VIRGINIA GETS 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 many West Virginia's 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 West Virginia did better than most states, its overall performance shows how much work is still ahead. In the six areas of teacher policy assessed—ranging from teacher admissions standards to compensation, the state earned three Cs and three Ds.

“West Virginia's policies, like all states', are in need of an overhaul,” said Kate Walsh, president of NCTQ. “It's time to exchange the gas-guzzling clunker for a hybrid.”

Among the findings:

- The state has lax oversight of its education schools; doing little to ensure the quality of students going in and teachers coming out of these programs.
- Unlike other professions, the state does not require that teachers are evaluated annually.
- The state pays insufficient attention to the content preparation of elementary teachers, increasing the likelihood that teachers finish their preparation with significant gaps in their knowledge of essential core subject areas such as American history.

Despite the bleak overall findings, there are a few bright spots. West Virginia does a better job than most states in its preparation requirements for secondary teachers. The state also requires teachers to pass the required licensing test before they begin their second year of teaching, something most states do not require.

To download copies of the West Virginia 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.