

June 27, 2007

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## **NEW JERSEY TEACHER POLICIES EARN COUNTRY'S HIGHEST 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 New Jersey takes a leadership role, some policies are counterproductive to the nation's teacher quality goals—

### **NEW JERSEY RATED TOP AMONG ALL STATES**

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 New Jersey 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 two Bs, three Cs, and one D.

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

Among the findings:

- New Jersey offers one of the few genuine alternate routes into teaching, insisting that prospective teachers meet high academic standards.
- The state earns a best practice designation for its policy limiting the amount of professional education coursework required by ed schools. This policy helps ensure that teacher preparation programs have well-balanced coursework requirements, and protects against potential excess.
- Despite a few strong policies, the state needs to do more to ensure the quality of the students going in and the teachers coming out of its ed school programs by providing a basic skills test as part of its entrance requirements.

- The state also needs to do more to ensure that elementary teachers are prepared to teach the science of reading instruction.

To download copies of the New Jersey report, which includes national comparisons, or to purchase printed copies of the report, visit the NCTQ website, [www.nctq.org](http://www.nctq.org). For questions about the report, please contact Lisa Cohen at (310) 395-2544 or [lisa@lisacohen.org](mailto:lisa@lisacohen.org) or Molly Jackman at (202) 393-0020 (ext. 15) or [mjackman@nctq.org](mailto: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.*