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OKLAHOMA GETS MEDIOCRE MARKS FOR TEACHER POLICIES IN NEW REPORT-- LABELED 'WEAK BUT PROGRESSING' --

–Today the National Council on Teacher Quality released a 50-state encyclopedia on states' teacher policies, concluding that while Oklahoma 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 Oklahoma 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, licensure to compensation reform, Oklahoma earned four “C” grades and two “D” grades.

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

Among the findings:

- Oklahoma is doing little to ensure that qualified teachers are distributed equitably among the state's poor and affluent schools.
- The state's oversight of education schools is lax. Oklahoma does little to monitor the quality of students going in and the quality of teachers coming out of its programs.
- Oklahoma neglects the preparation of special education teachers, failing to ensure that these teachers are prepared to teach students with disabilities.

Despite these bleak findings, there are some bright spots. Oklahoma has made a good effort to ensure that teachers are prepared in teaching the science of reading. In addition, it

requires annual evaluations of teachers that explicitly require and measure classroom effectiveness.

To download copies of the Oklahoma 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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