Education Commission of the States

ECS StateNotes & Policy Briefs

2008 Collection

2008 Collection of ECS StateNotes & Policy Briefs

Accountability

High School Level Accountability

This ECS StateNote reports the measures or indicators states use for public reporting of the school's performance, the method used to provide notice to schools falling below expectations and the supports offered to assist the school in raising performance, the sanctions which a state may turn to for ensuring performance improves, and the rewards offered to schools by the state when performance heightens.

Melodye Bush, Education Commission of the States, December 2008

No Pass No Play

"No Pass No Play" refers to policies in states that define eligibility for extracurricular activities and athletics based on academic performance, attendance and student behavior. Currently, 16 states have No Pass No Play policies that affect students statewide. This ECS StateNote provides information on the specific policies of each state with No Pass No Play.

Michael Colasanti, Education Commission of the States, February 2008

At-Risk

Beyond the GED: State Strategies To Help Former Dropouts Earn a High School Diploma

Seventy-four percent of the high school dropouts age 16-25 report that, if they could do it all over again, they would have stayed in school. This ECS Policy Brief provides information on various state policy components that can facilitate former dropouts' ability to earn a high school diploma. The brief also addresses finance elements state policymakers must consider when developing new education options.

Jennifer Dounay, Education Commission of the States, August 2008

Certification and Licensure

State Testing and Assessment Requirements for Initial and Continuing General Education Teachers

There are multiple requirements for teachers to become and remain certified and/or licensed to teach, including different types of tests and assessments. Passing one or more exams is a common requirement for initial teacher licensure. Assessment requirements vary across states from the type of tests administered to the required passing score(s). This ECS StateNote reports on the types of assessments each state requires for initial and continuing teacher certification and licensure only, and is not intended to advocate for the use of teacher assessments in determining teacher quality.

Angela Baber, Education Commission of the States, January 2008

Distance Learning/Virtual University

Virtual High Schools

Statewide virtual high schools are state-led schools created by state legislatures or state-level departmental agencies. Most programs are administered by a state's education department. This ECS StateNote examines statewide virtual high schools in the 50 states.

Melodye Bush, Education Commission of the States, August, 2008

Early College/Middle College

Improving Outcomes for Traditionally Underserved Students Through Early College High Schools

This policy brief, building upon the state policy research in the ECS database on early/middle college high schools, seeks to: 1) Define early college high schools, 2) Clarify how they differ from traditional dual enrollment programs, 3) Provide the most recent research on the positive impact on academic outcomes for traditionally underserved students who participate in such programs and 4) Set forth the model state policy components that undergird quality programs.

Jennifer Dounay, Education Commission of the States, October 2008

Issues in Funding Early and Middle College High Schools

Early and middle colleges allow students to earn a high school diploma free of cost while gaining postsecondary credit in a small school environment. To help determine how state funding systems for early/middle colleges differ from funding programs for traditional schools, ECS reviewed the funding policies for these seven states. This review focuses on three funding issues in particular: (1) How does the state fund early/middle colleges compared to traditional high schools? (2) Does the state provide additional funding to the higher education institution where students are earning their postsecondary education credits? (3) Is a student required to pay tuition?

Mike Griffith, Education Commission of the States, March 2008

Finance

Cost Per-Day for Extended School Year

Extending the school year has become a topic of interest to many state and federal policymakers. Prior to deciding to extend the school year it is important for policymakers to understand the associated costs. This ECS StateNote gives a rough estimate of the total cost and the instructional cost of school operation in each state.

Michael Griffith, Education Commission of the States, February 2008

On a Razor's Edge: The National Economy and School Budgets

Bad economic news is coming in waves these days. While news about the state of our nation's economy can be disheartening, it is important to remember that a national economic slowdown does not usually translate into immediate budget cuts for school districts. There is a progression from a national economic slowdown to reductions in school budgets, the stages of which are identified in this new ECS Policy Alert.

Mike Griffith, Education Commission of the States, April 2008

Financial Aid

Strategies to Empower Low-Income and Minority Students in Gaining Admission to and Paying for College

This policy brief identifies four types of barriers created by federal, state and local policies that pose a particular challenge for aspiring first-generation college students in the college and financial aid application process, and identifies state policies and programs designed to help underserved students and their families overcome these barriers.

Jennifer Dounay, Education Commission of the States, November 2008

Full-Day Kindergarten

State Statutes Regarding Kindergarten: Policies Concerning District Offering of and Student Attendance in Full- and Half-Day Kindergarten Programs

This ECS StateNote includes information on each state's offering of full-day kindergarten, as well as policies for student attendance in kindergarten.

Education Commission of the States, October 2008

Governance

State Education Governance Models

This ECS StateNote describes four state education governance models that 40 states use, and provides notes about the states and territories whose governance models do not conform to any of the four models.

Mary Fulton, Education Commission of the States, March 2008

High School

Issues in Funding Early and Middle College High Schools

Early and middle colleges allow students to earn a high school diploma free of cost while gaining postsecondary credit in a small school environment. To help determine how state funding systems for early/middle colleges differ from funding programs for traditional schools, ECS reviewed the funding policies for these seven states. This review focuses on three funding issues in particular: (1) How does the state fund early/middle colleges compared to traditional high schools? (2) Does the state provide additional funding to the higher education institution where students are earning their postsecondary education credits? (3) Is a student required to pay tuition?

Mike Griffith, Education Commission of the States, March 2008

Improving Outcomes for Traditionally Underserved Students Through Early College High Schools

This policy brief, building upon the state policy research in the ECS database on early/middle college high schools, seeks to: 1) Define early college high schools, 2) Clarify how they differ from traditional dual enrollment programs, 3) Provide the most recent research on the positive impact on academic outcomes for traditionally underserved students who participate in such programs and 4) Set forth the model state policy components that undergird quality programs.

Jennifer Dounay, Education Commission of the States, October 2008

High School Level Accountability

This ECS StateNote reports the measures or indicators states use for public reporting of the school's performance, the method used to provide notice to schools falling below expectations and the supports offered to assist the school in raising performance, the sanctions which a state may turn to for ensuring performance improves, and the rewards offered to schools by the state when performance heightens.

Melodye Bush, Education Commission of the States, December 2008

Improving the Skills and Knowledge of the High School Teachers We Already Have

This policy brief examines seven high-leverage components to strengthen teacher professional development at the high school level and provides state policy suggestions for each.

Jennifer Dounay and Kathy Christie, Education Commission of the States, October 2008

High School Agenda: Who's Doing What

This document provides information on the projects, initiatives and products of ECS and other national education and policy organizations on the subject of high school improvement. It is designed to direct policymakers to various groups and resources that might be useful in developing and implementing effective high school policy, and highlight important resources for anyone concerned with improving high schools. This May 2008 document reflects high school-focused reports published since spring 2005 and updates the May 2005 version of this document. (ECS Tools and Resources)

Michael Colasanti, Education Commission of the States, May 2008

High School Remediation

Measured purely in monetary terms, the costs of providing remediation at the high school level can seem high, but the costs of not providing adequate and timely remediation are even higher. This ECS Policy Brief provides the elements of effective remediation policies and examples of what some states are trying to do to meet the demands of preparing students for college and careers.

Kyle Zinth and Melodye Bush, Education Commission of the States, October 2008

2008 Collection of ECS StateNotes & Policy Briefs

Ensuring Successful Student Transitions from the Middle Grades To High School

The 9th-grade year is critical to students' success in high school. This ECS PolicyBrief looks at research on the 9th-grade transition, some expert recommendations and examples of relevant policies in place in the states.

Kathy Christie and Kyle Zinth, Education Commission of the States, November 2008

Strategies to Empower Low-Income and Minority Students in Gaining Admission to and Paying for College

This policy brief identifies four types of barriers created by federal, state and local policies that pose a particular challenge for aspiring first-generation college students in the college and financial aid application process, and identifies state policies and programs designed to help underserved students and their families overcome these barriers.

Jennifer Dounay, Education Commission of the States, November 2008

Strengthen Parents' Ability to Provide the Guidance and Support That Matter Most in High School

The higher the expectations of parents, the steadier their guidance and support, and the greater their sense of partnership with teachers and other staff, the better their child's chances of academic success. This ECS Policy Brief reviews: research on the types of parental involvement that positively impact high school students; state and local policies and practices that reflect and reinforce a commitment to parental involvement; and the parental involvement component of No Child Left Behind.

Tim Taylor and Jennifer Dounay, Education Commission of the States, August 2008

Beyond the GED: State Strategies To Help Former Dropouts Earn a High School Diploma

Seventy-four percent of the high school dropouts age 16-25 report that, if they could do it all over again, they would have stayed in school. This ECS Policy Brief provides information on various state policy components that can facilitate former dropouts' ability to earn a high school diploma. The brief also addresses finance elements state policymakers must consider when developing new education options.

Jennifer Dounay, Education Commission of the States, August 2008)

Adolescent Literacy

Traditionally reading is taught in the primary grades. However, a growing awareness of the need to address the reading skills of adolescents has resulted in states incorporating literacy instruction in their secondary-level teacher preparation and certification requirements, modifying and aligning curriculum standards, and establishing state policies to guide change.

Melodye Bush, Education Commission of the States, September 2008

Virtual High Schools

Statewide virtual high schools are state-led schools created by state legislatures or state-level departmental agencies. Most programs are administered by a state's education department. This ECS StateNote examines statewide virtual high schools in the 50 states.

Melodye Bush, Education Commission of the States, September, 2008

High School Graduation Requirements

Dispelling the Myths About the Negative Effect of Raising High School Graduation Requirements

In the last several years, a number of states have raised high school graduation requirements, particularly in mathematics and science. The negative impacts of raising high school graduation requirements are often raised by well-intentioned individuals as counter arguments to discussions in favor of raising students' course requirements; however these counter arguments are often based on misperceptions, or "myths." This policy brief presents the potential consequences commonly raised by critics of increased high school graduation requirements. Each "myth" is followed by relevant research and/or experience, as well as guiding principles for best policy in establishing more challenging curricular expectations for all students.

Jennifer Dounay, Education Commission of the States, August 2008)

Kindergarten

State Statutes Regarding Kindergarten: Policies Concerning District Offering of and Student Attendance in Full- and Half-Day Kindergarten Programs

This ECS StateNote includes information on each state's offering of full-day kindergarten, as well as policies for student attendance in kindergarten.

Education Commission of the States, October 2008

Middle School

Ensuring Successful Student Transitions from the Middle Grades To High School

The 9th-grade year is critical to students' success in high school. This ECS PolicyBrief looks at research on the 9th-grade transition, some expert recommendations and examples of relevant policies in place in the states.

Kathy Christie and Kyle Zinth, Education Commission of the States, November 2008

Minority/Diversity Issues

Strategies to Empower Low-Income and Minority Students in Gaining Admission to and Paying for College

This policy brief identifies four types of barriers created by federal, state and local policies that pose a particular challenge for aspiring first-generation college students in the college and financial aid application process, and identifies state policies and programs designed to help underserved students and their families overcome these barriers.

Jennifer Dounay, Education Commission of the States, November 2008

P-16/P-20

Landmines P-16/P-20 Councils Encounter — And How They Can Be Addressed (or Avoided Altogether)

Building upon the findings of the ECS database on P-16 and P-20 councils, and experience in the states, this policy brief sets forth the numerous challenges that can foil the best-laid plans of P-16 and P-20 councils, and suggests how they can be addressed or avoided altogether. These "landmines" lie in four areas: Actors, Agenda, Appropriation of Resources and Political Climate.

Jennifer Dounay, Education Commission of the States, November 2008

State P-16 and P-20 Council Considerations

The divergent state-level structures that govern and fund education in the states — and the similarly diverse challenges that states face — may call for different members, agendas and supports for state-level P-16 and P-20 councils. However, ECS research suggests that some indicators associated with a council's actors, agenda and appropriation of resources are positively associated with a council's capacity to influence or implement meaningful education reform. This worksheet is intended to help you evaluate whether your state's P-16 or P-20 council is aligned with some of these indicators. (ECS Tools and Resources)

Jennifer Dounay, Education Commission of the States, December 2008

Parent/Family

Strengthen Parents' Ability to Provide the Guidance and Support That Matter Most in High School

The higher the expectations of parents, the steadier their guidance and support, and the greater their sense of partnership with teachers and other staff, the better their child's chances of academic success. This ECS Policy Brief reviews: research on the types of parental involvement that positively impact high school students; state and local policies and practices that reflect and reinforce a commitment to parental involvement; and the parental involvement component of No Child Left Behind.

Tim Taylor and Jennifer Dounay, Education Commission of the States, August 2008

Postsecondary

Strategies to Empower Low-Income and Minority Students in Gaining Admission to and Paying for College

This policy brief identifies four types of barriers created by federal, state and local policies that pose a particular challenge for aspiring first-generation college students in the college and financial aid application process, and identifies state policies and programs designed to help underserved students and their families overcome these barriers.

Jennifer Dounay, Education Commission of the States, November 2008

Reading/Literacy

Adolescent Literacy

Traditionally reading is taught in the primary grades. However, a growing awareness of the need to address the reading skills of adolescents has resulted in states incorporating literacy instruction in their secondary-level teacher preparation and certification requirements, modifying and aligning curriculum standards, and establishing state policies to guide change.

Melodye Bush, Education Commission of the States, September 2008

Religion

School Prayer, Moment of Silence, Other Policies Concerning Religion

This ECS StateNote provides 50-state information on state-level policies concerning religion. Topics include prayer, moments of silence, the Bible as curriculum and posting the Ten Commandments in schools.

Michael Colasanti, Education Commission of the States, March 2008

Remediation

High School Remediation

Measured purely in monetary terms, the costs of providing remediation at the high school level can seem high, but the costs of not providing adequate and timely remediation are even higher. This ECS Policy Brief provides the elements of effective remediation policies and examples of what some states are trying to do to meet the demands of preparing students for college and careers.

Kyle Zinth and Melodye Bush, Education Commission of the States, October 2008

Scheduling/School Calendar

Number of Instructional Days/Hours In the School Year

This StateNote examines the number of instructional days required in each state. While state requirements vary on the number of instructional days and hours in the year, the majority of states set the school year at 180 days (30 states). Eleven states set the minimum number of instructional days between 160 and 179 days, two states set the minimum above 180 days (Kansas and Ohio) and eight states currently do not set a minimum number of instructional days.

Zaleski and Colasanti, Education Commission of the States, June 2008

Cost Per-Day for Extended School Year

Extending the school year has become a topic of interest to many state and federal policymakers. Prior to deciding to extend the school year it is important for policymakers to understand the associated costs. This ECS StateNote gives a rough estimate of the total cost and the instructional cost of school operation in each state.

Michael Griffith, Education Commission of the States, February 2008

School Safety -- Uniforms/Dress Codes

School Uniforms and Dress Codes: State Policies

This StateNote lists state policies on school uniforms and dress codes. No states mandate the use of school uniforms. Twenty-three states give local districts the authority to require students to wear uniforms. Indiana, Iowa and New Hampshire authorize local districts to establish dress codes, but do not mention uniforms in the state statute. Massachusetts' law prohibits dress codes.

Michael Colasanti, Education Commission of the States, March 2008

Special Education -- Funding

State Funding Programs for High-Cost Special Education Students

In this country approximately six-million public school students receive special education services. Of these six-million students, approximately 300,000, could be defined as "high need" or "high cost" students. This ECS StateNote presents the results of a survey of 12 states' high-cost special education policies to determine how each state defines special education students as being "high-cost" and what, if any, additional funding is provided to districts to address their funding need.

Mike Griffith, Education Commission of the States, May 2008

State Budgets/Expenditures

Cost Per-Day for Extended School Year

Extending the school year has become a topic of interest to many state and federal policymakers. Prior to deciding to extend the school year it is important for policymakers to understand the associated costs. This ECS StateNote gives a rough estimate of the total cost and the instructional cost of school operation in each state.

Michael Griffith, Education Commission of the States, February 2008

On A Razor's Edge: The National Economy and School Budgets

Bad economic news is coming in waves these days. While news about the state of our nation's economy can be disheartening, it is important to remember that a national economic slowdown does not usually translate into immediate budget cuts for school districts. There is a progression from a national economic slowdown to reductions in school budgets, the stages of which are identified in this new ECS Policy Alert.

Mike Griffith, Education Commission of the States, April 2008

State Policymaking -- Ballot Questions

Education-Related Ballot Questions: 2008

2008 saw voters in 15 states weigh in on a variety of issues pertaining to state-level education policy. This ECS StateNote examines each of these ballot questions, and whether voters approved or rejected them.

Kyle Zinth, Education Commission of the States, November 2008

Student Supports -- Remediation

High School Remediation

Measured purely in monetary terms, the costs of providing remediation at the high school level can seem high, but the costs of not providing adequate and timely remediation are even higher. This ECS Policy Brief provides the elements of effective remediation policies and examples of what some states are trying to do to meet the demands of preparing students for college and careers.

Kyle Zinth and Melodye Bush, Education Commission of the States, October 2008

Teacher Quality -- Certification and Licensure

State Testing and Assessment Requirements for Initial and Continuing General Education Teachers

There are multiple requirements for teachers to become and remain certified and/or licensed to teach, including different types of tests and assessments. Passing one or more exams is a common requirement for initial teacher licensure. Assessment requirements vary across states from the type of tests administered to the required passing score(s). This ECS StateNote reports on the types of assessments each state requires for initial and continuing teacher certification and licensure only, and is not intended to advocate for the use of teacher assessments in determining teacher quality.

Angela Baber, Education Commission of the States, January 2008

Teacher Quality -- Professional Development

Improving the Skills and Knowledge of the High School Teachers We Already Have

This policy brief examines seven high-leverage components to strengthen teacher professional development at the high school level and provides state policy suggestions for each.

Jennifer Dounay and Kathy Christie, Education Commission of the States, October 2008

Teacher Quality -- Unions/Collective Bargaining

State Collective Bargaining Policies For Teachers

This ECS StateNote provides data on collective bargaining in the states, including which states have such legislation, who is covered, the scope of coverage, impasse procedures and whether or not strikes are permitted.

Michael Colasanti, Education Commission of the States, January 2008

Uniforms/Dress Codes

School Uniforms and Dress Codes: State Policies

This StateNote lists state policies on school uniforms and dress codes. No states mandate the use of school uniforms. Twenty-three states give local districts the authority to require students to wear uniforms. Indiana, Iowa and New Hampshire authorize local districts to establish dress codes, but do not mention uniforms in the state statute. Massachusetts' law prohibits dress codes.

Michael Colasanti, Education Commission of the States, March 2008

Youth Engagement

State Policies on Youth Engagement In Policymaking

This ECS StateNote examines results of a 50-state review of state policies that encourage student involvement in decision-making and policymaking. While many institutions of higher education, districts and schools have similar policies, this review was limited to identifying those opportunities codified at the state level in state statute and administrative code.

Judy English, Jennifer Piscatelli, Ann Rautio and Hillary Whitten, Education Commission of the States, June 2008

StateNotes

Teacher Certification and Licensure / Testing Requirements

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

By Angela Baber

January 2008

(Information gathered August, 2007)

State Testing and Assessment Requirements for Initial and Continuing General Education Teachers

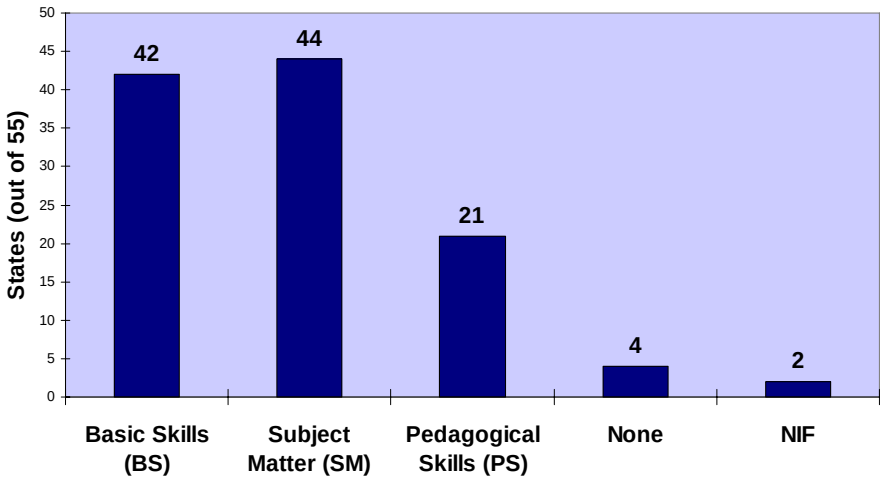
There are multiple requirements for teachers to become and remain certified and/or licensed to teach, including different types of tests and assessments. Passing one or more exams is a common requirement for initial teacher licensure. Assessment requirements vary across states from the type of tests administered to the required passing score(s). This StateNote reports on the types of assessments each state requires for initial and continuing teacher certification and licensure only, and is not intended to advocate for the use of teacher assessments in determining teacher quality. State passing scores for applicable exams are reported across states when available. The data collected cover in-state traditional certification and licensure testing requirements for general education teachers. Requirements for all 50 states, the District of Columbia and four U.S. Territories are represented.

For more information on state policy regarding teacher certification and licensure visit the ECS Teacher Certification and Licensure 50-State Database (http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/reportTQ.aspx?id=1137).

Initial Teacher Certification and Licensure Examination Requirements

The following table illustrates the number of states that require basic skills assessments, subject matter assessments and pedagogical assessments for initial teacher certification and licensure.

State Examination Requirements for Initial Teacher Certification/Licensure



Basic Skills

The timing of testing requirements varies by state. Basic skills assessments can be a requirement for entry into or graduation from teacher preparation programs in some states, while in other states it is simply a requirement for certification. Forty-two states require basic skills examinations for initial teacher licensure. Fourteen of those states require this type of assessment as a preparation program requirement and the remaining as a certification requirement.

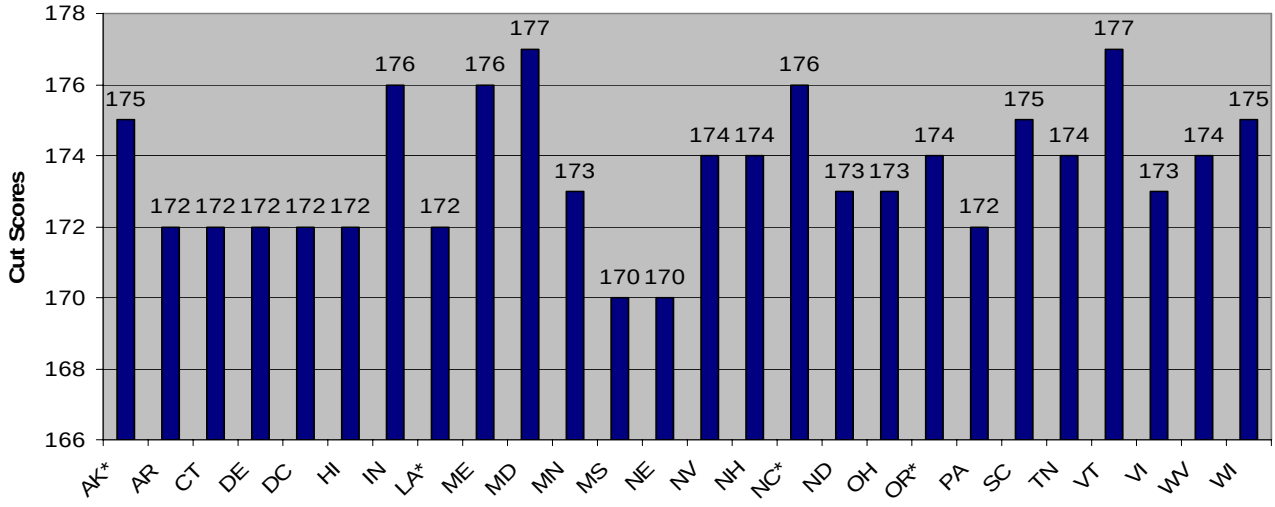
Teacher examinations may be designed and administered by organizations such as the Educational Testing Services (ETS) and National Evaluation System (NES), or by individual states. For their basic skills assessment 23 states (42%) use the Praxis I Basic Skills Assessment, nine states (16%) use the NES Basic Skills Assessment, four states (7%) use their own state designed assessments, two (4%) states use other types of assessments and five states (9%) use combinations of assessments. Of these states, three states offer Praxis I as one possibility for meeting basic skill assessment requirements. Eleven of the remaining states (20%) do not require any basic skills assessment for initial licensure (no information was found for American Samoa or Guam). The ETS Praxis I Basic Skills series includes reading, writing and math assessments[1].

Praxis I Passing Scores

States set state-specific passing scores, or cut scores, for basic skills examinations. NES state-designed assessments are unique and cut scores cannot be compared across states. ETS Praxis Series exams do not vary, however, and passing scores for Praxis exams can be compared across states. As mentioned above, 23 states require the Praxis I series and three states – Alaska, Louisiana and Oregon – offer Praxis I as one possibility for meeting basic skill assessment requirements.[2]

There are discrepancies between state passing score requirements. For the reading portion of the Praxis I Basic Skills Assessment, the passing scores range from a low of 170 to a high of 177 – a span of seven points with a mean passing score of 174. In writing, scores range from 171-175 with 172 as the mean. Math passing scores show the greatest contrast across states ranging from passing scores of 169-177 – a span of eight points and a mean of 172 points. The following charts represent state passing scores for all three portions of the Praxis I Basic Skills Assessment series.

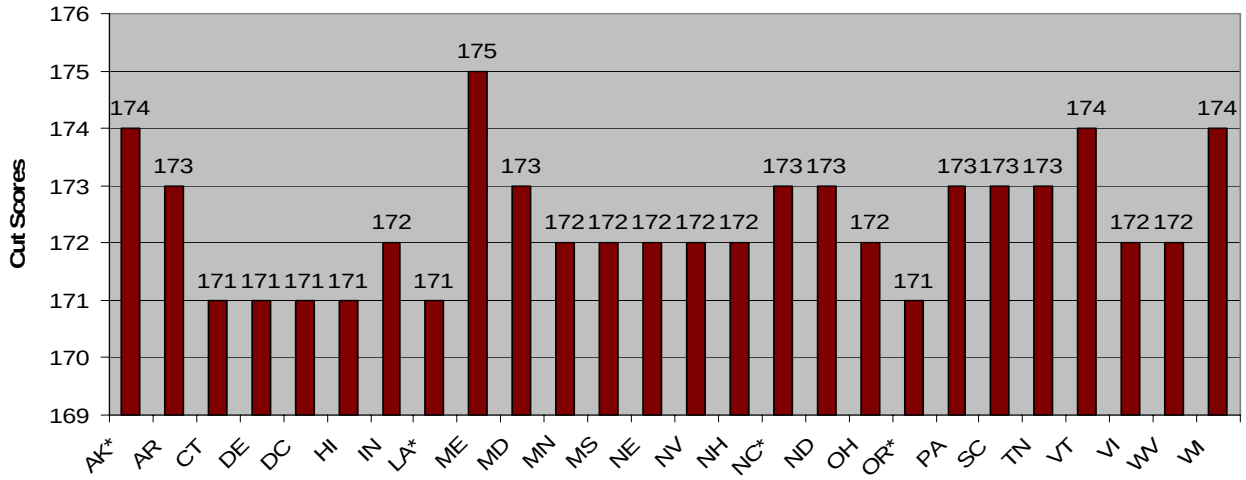
State Cut Scores for Praxis I Basic Skills Assessment in Reading



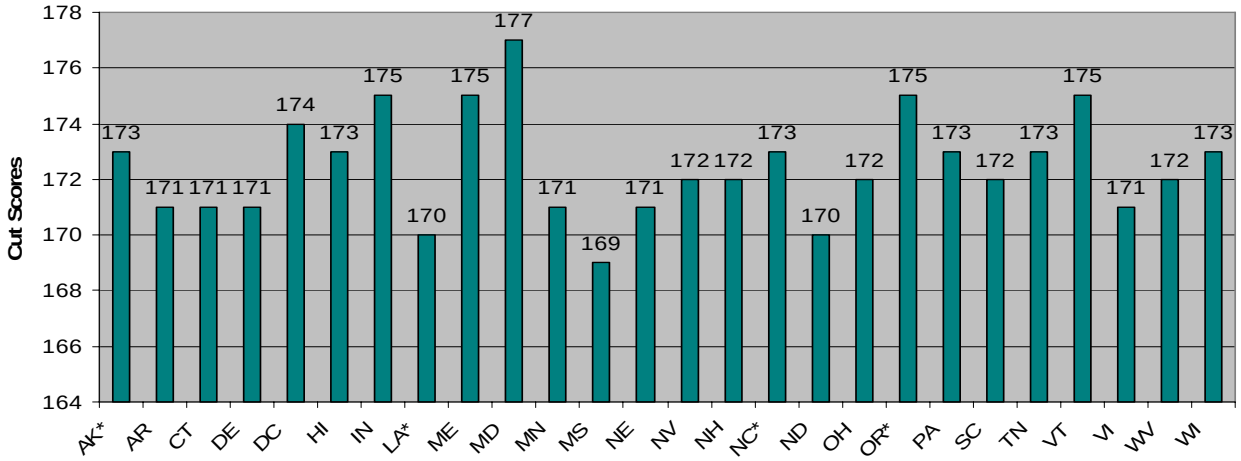
[1] Paper- and computer-based versions exist. Few differences were found between the passing scores for paper vs. computer-based exams, thus the following data is based on the paper version of the exam, but is a good representation of both versions.

[2] These three states are indicated by an asterisk (*) in the following charts.

State Cut Scores for Praxis I Basic Skills Assessment in Writing



State Cut Scores for Praxis I Basic Skills Assessment in Math



Subject Matter

In order to meet content proficiency requirements, 31 states (56%) require the Praxis II Subject Matter Assessment, nine states (16%) require a NES assessment, two states (4%) have state designed assessments, one state requires another state's assessment, one state offers multiple assessment options and nine states (15%) do not require any type of subject matter assessment for initial licensure (no information was found for Guam or American Samoa). Praxis II exam content is consistent across the states; however, the vast number of subject- and grade-level requirements complicates multiple-state comparisons and therefore no comparison of cut scores for Praxis II Subject Matter Assessments is included within this State Note.

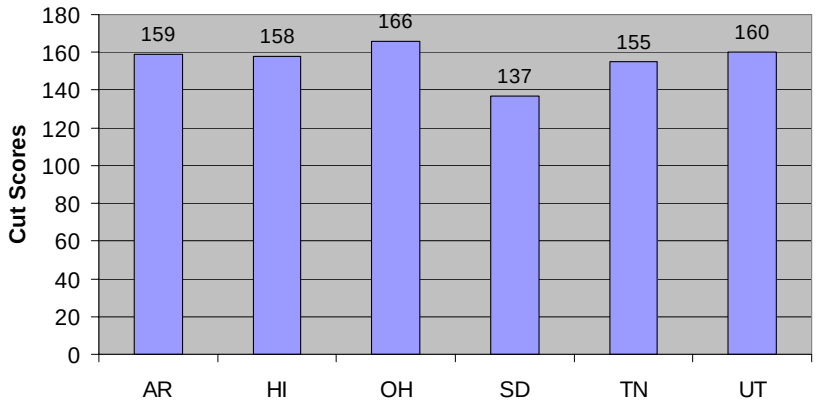
Pedagogical Skills

Thirty-one states (58%) do not require a pedagogical assessment for initial teacher licensure. Fifteen states (27%) require the Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) pedagogical assessment at one or more levels (Pre-K, Elementary, Middle, Secondary), four states (7%) require a state NES pedagogical assessment, one state requires a state designed assessment and a single state requires some other type of assessment (no information was found for American Samoa, Guam or Puerto Rico).

Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching Passing Scores

Of the 21 states that require some sort of pedagogical exam for initial teacher licensure, 15 states require the Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching exam. That means that of the 38% of states that require this type of assessment, the vast majority – 71% – use the Praxis II exam(s). The Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) exam is geared toward one of the four following levels: Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle and Secondary. The following tables illustrate which states use which level(s) of the Praxis II pedagogical exam. State designated cut scores for these exams have also been recorded.

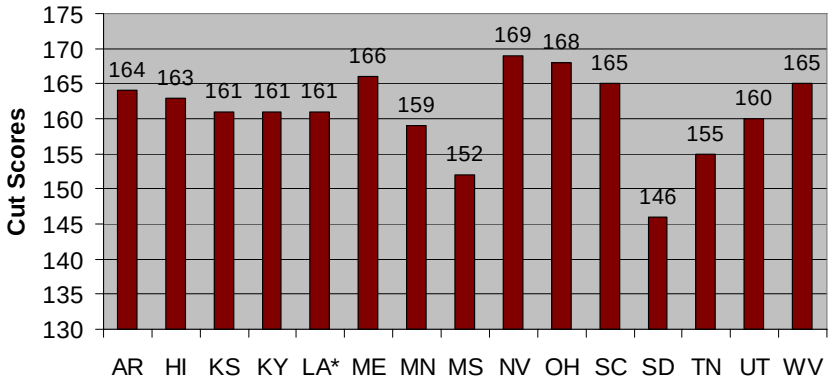
Early Childhood Teachers:
Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching Exam



Six states require the Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching exam for initial teacher certification for early childhood teachers.

Passing scores range from 137-166 with a mean score of 156. The difference between the lowest and highest score requirements is 29 points.

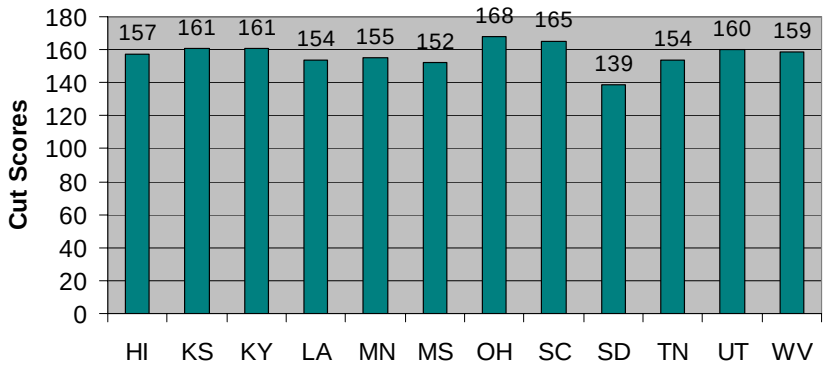
Elementary-Level Teachers:
Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching Exam



Fifteen states require the Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching exam for initial teacher certification Elementary-Level teachers.

Passing scores range from 146-169 with a mean score of 161. The difference between the lowest and highest score requirements is 23 points.

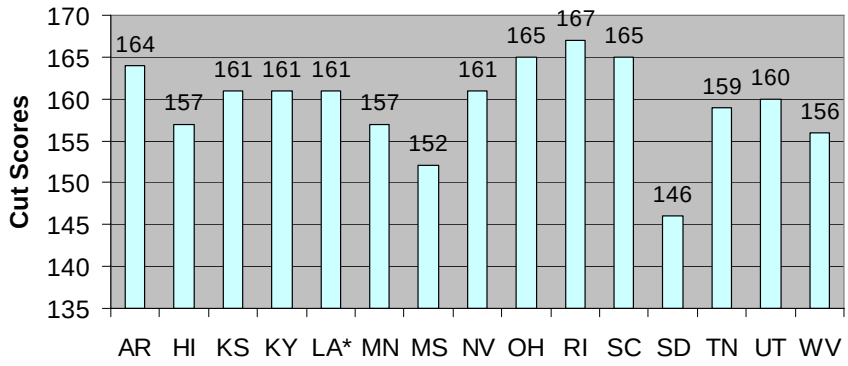
Middle-Level Teachers:
Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching Exam



Twelve states require the Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching exam for initial teacher certification Middle-Level teachers.

Passing scores range from 139-168 with a mean score of 157. The difference between the lowest and highest score requirements is 29 points.

Secondary-Level Teachers:
Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching Exam



Fifteen states require the Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching exam for initial teacher certification Secondary-Level teachers.

Passing scores range from 146 -167 with a mean score of 159. The difference between the lowest and highest score requirements is 21 points.

Continuing Teacher Certification and Licensure Requirements

State	Subject	Pedagogy	Performance
AK	Praxis II		
AZ			NES
AR			PraxisIII
CT		State	
FL		State	
GA		NES	
KY*	Praxis II (Elementary)	Praxis II (Secondary)	
LA			State
NY			NES
OH			PraxisIII
SC			State
UT		Praxis II (Secondary)	

At least twelve states require an assessment for continuing certification and licensure. In addition to the subject and pedagogy assessments, performance assessments are used by states as a way to determine a teacher's eligibility to progress to a more advanced licensure level. This table illustrates two states requiring subject matter assessments, five states requiring pedagogical assessments and six states requiring performance assessments as a condition to progress or continue as a teacher.

*Requirement(s) dependent on grade(s) taught.

State Testing and Assessment Requirements for Initial and Continuing General Education Teachers

State Testing Information and Resources

The following link provides access to a table including detailed state testing information, source information and links to relevant resources for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands collected in August 2007. No information was found for American Samoa or Guam.

http://www.ecs.org/html/docs/StateCLAssessmentTable.pdf

Angela Baber is a researcher for the Teaching Quality and Leadership Institute, at the Education Commission of the States.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

State Collective Bargaining Policies for Teachers

Update by Michael Colasanti

January 2008

Collective bargaining for teachers is a relatively new phenomenon. A 1960 teacher strike in New York City led to the first-ever collective bargaining agreement for American teachers in 1962 between the United Federation of Teachers and the City of New York. As strikes spread across the country in the 1960s and 70s, many states eventually passed public sector collective bargaining legislation that codified negotiations between teacher unions and school districts. As collective bargaining spread across the nation, so did the power of teacher unions such as the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the National Education Association (NEA). The power teachers' unions wield over education policy, often through the collective bargaining agreements, is praised by some, but derided by others. Collective bargaining for teachers is a contentious issue that promises to grow increasingly complex as governance reform – changing who makes what decisions about public education – takes center stage.

Collective bargaining, if a state allows it, always occurs at the school district level. State policy, however, influences the process in a number of ways, from prohibiting strikes to dictating the terms of arbitration. This *ECS StateNote* addresses the following areas of collective bargaining state policy:

- **STATE POLICY:** This section addresses whether a state has a collective bargaining law. Currently, 35 states have such laws.
- **COVERAGE/EXCLUSIONS:** This section presents who is covered under the law, such as teachers, and who may be excluded from coverage, such as superintendents and other school administrators.
- **SCOPE OF BARGAINING:** This section details which issues are negotiable under the state's collective bargaining law. Though some states actually allow teachers to bargain over issues of curriculum or classroom management, most limit the scope of bargaining to wages, hours and other conditions of employment such as health benefits, vacation time or pension plans.
- **RIGHT TO WORK:** This section shows whether a state has a "right to work" law. "Right to work" laws prevent collective bargaining agreements from containing union security clauses that require workers to support and share the costs of union representation. Twenty-two states, mostly located in the southern United States, have a "right to work" law.

- **BARGAINING IMPASSE PROCEDURES:** This section addresses what steps are taken to reach a resolution if an agreement cannot be reached through initial negotiations between a teacher union and a school district. Thirty-four states use mediation, in which a third party attempts to broker an agreement between the two parties. Twenty-nine states use fact-finding procedures that allow an impartial panel to review both sides of the dispute, report their findings and occasionally make recommendations for settlement. Arbitration, in which an impartial party holds a formal hearing and determines a resolution, is similar to mediation, but the ruling of the third party is often binding and final. Twenty-one states provide for voluntary arbitration in which one side or the other can request a hearing. Three states mandate arbitration in which the two sides have to submit to a formal hearing.

- **STRIKES:** This section presents whether strikes by teachers or other public employees are prohibited or permitted under state policy, and, if they are prohibited, whether there are any penalties for those who strike. Twenty-two states prohibit strikes and 13 states permit them. There are penalties for strikes in 13 states, which range from fines to dismissal to, in some cases, imprisonment.

State Collective Bargaining Policies										
STATE	STATE POLICY	COVERAGE/ EXCLUSIONS	SCOPE OF BARGAINING	RIGHT TO WORK	BARGAINING IMPASSE PROCEDURES			STRIKES		
					Mediation	Fact Finding	Arbitration	Prohibited	Permitted	Penalties
Alabama [ALA. CODE § 25-7-12]	No state collective bargaining law			X						
Alaska [ALASKA STAT. §§ 23.40.070 et seq.]	Recognizes the right of public employees to organize for the purpose of collective bargaining.	Certified and non-certified school employees, except for school superintendents	Wages, hours and conditions of employment		X		Mandatory		X	
Arizona [ARIZ. REV.	No state collective bargaining law			X						

State Collective Bargaining Policies										
STATE	STATE POLICY	COVERAGE/ EXCLUSIONS	SCOPE OF BARGAINING	RIGHT TO WORK	BARGAINING IMPASSE PROCEDURES			STRIKES		
					Mediation	Fact Finding	Arbitration	Prohibited	Permitted	Penalties
STAT. § 23-1302]										
Arkansas [ARK. CODE ANN. § 11-3-303]	No state collective bargaining law			X						
California [CAL. GOV'T CODE §§ 3540 et seq.]	Recognizes the right of public school employees to join organizations of their own choice, to be represented by the organizations in their professional and employment relationships with public school employers, and to afford certificated employees a voice in the formulation of educational policy.	Public school employees with the exception of managerial, confidential and supervisory employees	Wages, hours and conditions of employment		X	X	Voluntary	X		
Colorado	No state collective bargaining law									

Connecticut [CONN. GEN. STAT. § § 10-153A et seq.]	Provides rights concerning professional organization and negotiations.	Teachers are covered. Superintendents, assistant superintendents, personnel or budget employees and temporary substitutes are not	Wages, hours and conditions of employment		X		Mandatory	X		
Delaware [DEL. CODE. ANN. tit. 14 §§ 4001 et seq.]	Obligates boards of education and school employee organizations that have been certified as representing their school employees to enter into collective bargaining negotiations.	School employees with the exception of supervisory staff	Wages, benefits, hours, work conditions and grievance procedures		X	X		X		X
Florida [FLA. STAT. §§ 447.201 et seq.]	Grants to public employees the right of organization and representation; requiring the state, local governments, and other political subdivisions to negotiate with bargaining agents duly certified to represent public	All public employees, including teachers	Terms and conditions of employment except those provided for in merit and civil service laws	X	X	X		X		X

	employees.									
Georgia [GA. CODE ANN. § 34-6-21]	No state collective bargaining law			X						
Hawaii [HAW. REV. STAT §§ 89-1 et seq.]	Recognizes the right of public employees to organize for the purpose of collective bargaining; requiring the public employers to negotiate with and enter into written agreements with exclusive representatives on matters of wages, hours, and other conditions of employment.	All public employees, including teachers	Wages, hours and conditions of employment, excluding retirement, health benefits and recruitment examinations		X	X	Voluntary		X	
Idaho [IDAHO CODE §§ 33-1271 ET SEQ; 44-2001]	Empowers the board of trustees of each school district, including specially chartered districts to, upon its own initiative or upon the request of a local education organization representing professional	Teachers, excluding superintendents, supervisors and principals	Conditions of employment	X	X	X		X		

	employees, enter into a negotiation agreement with the local education organization or the designated representative(s).									
Illinois [115 ILL. COMP. STAT. 5/1 et seq.]	Permits educational employees to organize, form, join or assist in employee organizations and requires employers to negotiate and bargain with organizations representing employees.	Public school employees, with the exception of supervisors, short-term or part-time employees, and students	Wages, hours and conditions of employment		X	X	Voluntary		X	
Indiana [IND. CODE ANN. §§ 20-29-1-1 et seq.]	Provides that school employees and employers have the right and obligation to bargain collectively.	Teachers are covered. Supervisors, part-time employees and security personnel are not	Wages, hours, benefits, curriculum development, teaching methods, textbook selection, class size, student discipline and budget appropriation	X	X	X	Voluntary	X		X

Iowa [IOWA CODE §§ 20.1 et seq.; 731.1]	Permits public employees to organize and bargain collectively.	All public employees, including teachers, but excluding confidential and temporary employees	Wages, hours, vacation time, insurance, holidays, leave, overtime, seniority, and health and safety issues, among others	X	X	X	Mandatory	X		X
Kansas [KAN. STAT. ANN. §§ 72-5410 et seq.]	Professional employees have the right to form, join or assist professional employees' organizations, to participate in professional negotiation with boards of education through representatives of their own choosing for the purpose of establishing, maintaining, protecting or improving terms and conditions of professional service.	Teachers, excluding administrative employees and retirees	Wages, hours, holiday and sick time, retirement, insurance benefits, grievance and disciplinary procedures, termination and non-renewal of contracts, among others		X	X		X		

Kentucky	No state collective bargaining law.									
Louisiana [LA. REV. STAT. ANN. § 23:981]	No state collective bargaining law.			X						
Maine [ME. REV. STAT. ANN. TIT. 26 §§ 961 et seq.]	Provides a uniform basis for recognizing the right of public employees to join labor organizations of their own choosing and to be represented by such organizations in collective bargaining for terms and conditions of employment.	All municipal employees; including school employees. Superintendents and assistant superintendents, temporary, seasonal, and on-call employees are excluded	Wages, hours, grievance arbitration, and working conditions		X	X	Voluntary	X		
Maryland [MD. CODE ANN., EDUC. §§ 6-401 et seq.; 6-501 et seq.]	Maryland has two collective bargaining laws that cover school employees: #1: Pertains to certified employees #2: Pertains to non-certified employees	#1: Teachers, excluding county superintendents #2: Non-certified public school employees, excluding management personnel and confidential employees	Wages, hours and working conditions	X[i]	X	X		X		X

Massachusetts [MASS. ANN. LAWS CH. 150E, §§ 1 et seq.]	Provides that employees have the right of self-organization and the right to form, join or assist any employee organization for the purpose of bargaining collectively through representatives of their own choosing on questions of wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment.	All public employees, including teachers	Wages, hours, performance standards and conditions of employment		X	X	Voluntary	X		X
Michigan [MICH. COMP. LAWS §§ 423.201 et seq.]	Provides for public employees to organize together or to form, join or assist in labor organizations, to engage in lawful concerted activities for the purpose of collective negotiation or bargaining or other mutual aid and protection, or to negotiate or bargain collectively with their public employers through	Municipal and local government employees, including teachers	Wages, hours and conditions of employment		X	X		X		X

	representatives of their own free choice.									
Minnesota [MINN. STAT. §§ 179A.01 et seq.]	Grants public employees certain rights to organize and choose freely their representatives; requires public employers to meet and negotiate with public employees in an appropriate bargaining unit and provides that the result of bargaining be in written agreements.	All public employees, including teachers	Hours, fringe benefits, grievance procedures and conditions of employment, excluding retirement benefits		X		Voluntary		X	
Mississippi [MISS. CODE ANN. § 71-1-47]	No state collective bargaining law			X						
Missouri [MO. REV. STAT. § 105.510]	Although the state has a collective bargaining law, teachers at schools, colleges and universities are excluded from it.									
Montana [MONT. CODE ANN. §§ 39-31-	Encourages the practice and procedure of	All public employees, including	Wages, hours, fringe benefits and conditions		X	X	Voluntary		X	

101 et seq.]	collective bargaining to arrive at friendly adjustment of all disputes between public employers and their employees.	teachers. Clerks and administrators of school districts are excluded	of employment							
Nebraska [NEB. REV. STAT. §§ 48-217; 81-1369 et seq.]	Recognizes the right of state employees in bargaining units to organize for the purpose of collective bargaining and requires state employees represented by an exclusive collective-bargaining agent to negotiate with and enter into written agreements on matters of wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment.	State employees including teachers	Hours, wages, and other conditions of employment	X	X	X			X	
Nevada [NEV. REV. STAT. ANN. §§ 288.010 et seq.; 613.250]	Recognizes the right of every local government employee, subject to limitations, to join any employee	Local government public employees, including employees of	Wages, hours, sick leave, vacation time, insurance benefits, teacher	X	X	X	Voluntary	X		X

	organization of his choice or to refrain from joining any employee organization. Every local government employer must negotiate in good faith through one or more representatives concerning the mandatory subjects of bargaining.	school districts	preparation time, materials and supplies for classrooms, grievance and arbitration procedures, and discharge and disciplinary procedures							
New Hampshire [N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. §§ 273-A:1 et seq.]	Provides that it is the obligation of the public employer and the employee organization certified by the board as the exclusive representative of the bargaining unit to negotiate in good faith.	All public employees, including teachers	Wages, hours and conditions of employment		X	X	Voluntary	X		
New Jersey [N.J. STAT. ANN. §§ 34:13A-1 et seq.]	Employer-Employee Relations Act gives public employees the right to form or join a union and have the right to be represented in collective	All public employees, including teachers	Conditions of employment and grievance procedures		X	X	Voluntary	X		

	negotiations by that union.									
New Mexico [N.M. STAT. ANN. §§ 10-7E-1 et seq.]	Guarantees public employees the right to organize and bargain collectively with their employers.	Public employees, including teachers	Wages, hours, and other conditions of employment, including the impact of professional and instructional decisions		X		Voluntary	X		X
New York [N.Y. CIV. SERV. LAW §§ 200 et seq.]	Public Employees Fair Employment Act grants public employees the right of organization and representation and requires state and local governments and other political subdivisions to negotiate with, and enter into written agreements with employee organizations representing public employees that have been certified or recognized.	All public employees, including teachers	Wages, hours, conditions of employment and grievance procedures		X	X	Voluntary	X		X
North Carolina [N.C. Gen. Stat. § 95-79]	No state collective bargaining law.			X						

North Dakota [N.D. CENT. CODE, §§ 15.1-16-01 et seq.; 34-01-14]	Provides that an individual employed as a teacher or administrator may form, join and participate in the activities of a representative organization of the individual's choosing for the purpose of representation on matters of employer-employee relations.	Teachers and administrators	Wages, hours, conditions of employment and labor-management relations	X	X	X		X		X
Ohio [OHIO REV. CODE ANN. 4117.01 et seq.]	Provides that public employees have the right to bargain collectively with their public employers to determine wages, hours, terms and other conditions of employment and the continuation, modification or deletion of an existing provision of a collective bargaining agreement, and enter into collective bargaining	All public employees, including teachers, and excluding, among others, assistant superintendents, principals, and assistant principals	Wages, hours, healthcare benefits, conditions of employment and the modification of any collective bargaining provision		X	X	Voluntary		X	

	agreements.									
Oklahoma [OKLA. STAT. TIT. 70 §§ 509.1 et seq.]	Strengthens methods of administering employer-employee relations through the establishment of an orderly process of communications between school employees and the school district.	Public school employees, including principals and assistant principals	Wages, hours, fringe benefits and work conditions			X		X		X
Oregon [OR. REV. STAT. §§ 243.650 et seq.]	Obligates public employers, public employees and their representatives to enter into collective negotiations with willingness to resolve grievances and disputes relating to employment relations and to enter into written and signed contracts evidencing agreements resulting from such negotiations.	All public employees, including teachers	Wages, hours, sick leave, vacation time, grievance procedures and other conditions of employment		X	X	Voluntary		X	

Pennsylvania [PA. STAT. ANN. TIT. 43 §§ 1101.101 et seq.]	Grants public employees the right to organize and choose freely their representatives; requires public employers to negotiate and bargain with employee organizations representing public employees and to enter into written agreements evidencing the result of such bargaining.	All public employees, including teachers	Wages, hours and conditions of employment		X	X	Voluntary		X	
Rhode Island [R.I. GEN. LAWS §§ 28-9.3-1 et seq.]	Accords to certified public school teachers the right to organize, to be represented, to negotiate professionally, and to bargain on a collective basis with school committees covering hours, salary, working conditions and other terms of professional employment.	Teachers, excluding superintendents, principals and assistant principals	Wages, hours, working conditions and other terms of employment		X		Voluntary		X	

South Carolina [S.C. Code Ann. § 41-7-20]	No state collective bargaining law.			X						
South Dakota [S.D. CODIFIED LAWS §§ 3-18-1 et seq.; 60-8-3]	Public employees have the right to form and join labor or employee organizations, and have the right to designate representatives for the purpose of meeting and negotiating with the governmental agency or representatives designated by it with respect to grievance procedures and conditions of employment.	All public employees, including teachers and school administrators	Wages, rates of pay, hours and conditions of employment	X	X	X		X		X
Tennessee [TENN. CODE ANN. §§ 49-5-601 et seq.; 50-1-203]	Recognizes the rights of professional employees of boards of education to form, join and assist professional employee organizations to meet, confer, consult and	Teachers, excluding managerial employees	Wages, working conditions, insurance benefits, grievance procedure, student discipline, payroll deductions, leave and	X	X	X	Voluntary	X		X

	negotiate with boards of education over matters relating to terms and conditions of professional service.		fringe benefits							
Texas [TEX. LAB. CODE ANN. § 101.052]	No state collective bargaining law for teachers.			X						
Utah [Utah Code Ann. §§ 34-20-1 et seq.; 34-34-4]	Provides that employees have the right to self-organization, to form, join or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and to engage in concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection.	All public employees, including teachers	Wages, hours and conditions of employment	X	X				X	
Vermont [VT. STAT. ANN. TIT. 16, §§ 1981 et seq.]	Teachers and administrators may select organizations to represent them in collective	Teachers and school administrators	Wages, grievance procedures and other conditions of employment		X	X	Voluntary		X	

	negotiations with the school board.									
Virginia [VA. CODE ANN. § 40.1-60]	No state collective bargaining law.			X						
Washington [WASH. REV. CODE §§ 41.59.010 et seq.]	Employees shall have the right to self-organization, to form, join or assist employee organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing.	Teachers, excluding administrative officers	Wages, hours and conditions of employment		X	X	Voluntary	X		
West Virginia	No state collective bargaining law.									
Wisconsin [WIS. STAT. §§ 111.70 et seq.]	Creates the Municipal Employment Relations Law, which gives public employees the right to bargain collectively.	Municipal employees, including teachers	Wages, hours and conditions of employment		X	X	Voluntary		X	
Wyoming [WYO. STAT. ANN. § 27-7-109]	No state collective bargaining law.			X						

This ECS StateNote was originally compiled by Carl Krueger, researcher, ECS National Center on Governing America's Schools, with financial support from the Joyce Foundation. 2008 update by Michael Colasanti, associate researcher, ECS Information Clearinghouse.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

[i] Some non-certificated employees are exempt from this "right to work" provision

StateNotes

Accountability/Sanctions

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

No Pass No Play

By Michael Colasanti

February 2008

I. Introduction

Extracurricular activities and interscholastic athletics can play a meaningful role in the life of a high school student. These activities are associated with skills that are valued in the workplace, but are not necessarily assessed in the classroom: teamwork, self-confidence, the ability to succeed in a competitive situation.[1] Research shows that student participation in extracurricular activities and athletics benefit student learning. For example, participation in these types of activities is associated with increases in math and science test scores.[2] The desire to participate in sports and extracurricular activities can play a strong role in encouraging students to attend school and engage in class.

"No Pass No Play" refers to policies in states that define eligibility for extracurricular activities and athletics based on academic performance, attendance and student behavior. Currently, 16 states have No Pass No Play policies that affect students statewide. The majority of these policies (11 of 16) are based solely on academic performance.

The following tables in Part II list each of the 16 states with a statewide No Pass No Play policy (in other states, most districts have similar policies). The tables are divided into two sections: Table A lists those states where the state sets the framework for eligibility policies, while Table B lists the states where the district is required to formulate the policy. The tables contain the following information:

- **Coverage and definitions:** This section outlines which activities (extracurricular, cocurricular, athletic) are covered by the state's No Pass No Play policy and how those activities are defined. Eight states explicitly define the activities covered.
- **District role:** This section describes what role the state plays in setting the specific parameters of the eligibility policies. Some districts are afforded wide latitude while others are given less room to tailor the policies. Most states allow districts to exceed their eligibility requirements.
- **No Pass No Play criteria:** This section describes the eligibility criteria considered in the policies. These criteria range from academic performance to attendance to student behavior. Every state bases eligibility on academic performance, and of those, five states include attendance and/or student behavior criteria as well.
- **Period of ineligibility:** This section describes how long a student must wait once ruled ineligible. This ranges from three weeks to two semesters.
- **Notes/other:** This section provides other information related to the states' policies.

Part III provides the states' criteria used to determine eligibility. The language in part III is taken directly from state statute and/or departmental rules and regulations.

II. Table A- No Pass No Play: State-Set Parameters

State	Coverage and Definitions	District Role	No Pass No Play Criteria			Period of Ineligibility	Notes/Other
			Academic	Attendance	Conduct		
Alabama ALA. ADMIN. CODE r. 290-3-1-.02	*Extracurricular activities associated with athletics:* Defined as those recognized and sanctioned by the Alabama High School Athletic association. *Other extracurricular activities:* Defined as those that are sanctioned by a public school which are not related to a student's academic requirements or success in a course.	Districts may impose more strict eligibility criteria than the state's, but must use the state's criteria as a minimum.	X			2 semesters	Students beginning the academic year eligible remain eligible for the entire academic year.
Arizona ARIZ. ADMIN. CODE R7-2-808	*Extracurricular activities:* Defined as all interscholastic activities which are of a competitive nature and involve more than one school where a championship, winner, or rating is determined; and all those endeavors of a continuous and ongoing nature for which no credit is earned in meeting graduation or promotional requirements and are organized, planned, and sponsored by the district consistent with district policy.	Districts individually establish the criteria for a "passing grade" and "satisfactory progress toward graduation" required for participation.	X			9 weeks (or less)	Districts must offer educational support services to students ruled ineligible.
California CAL. EDUC. CODE	*Extracurricular activities:* Defined as programs that are supervised or financed by the school district,	Districts may impose more strict eligibility criteria than the state's, but must use	X			District determines	Districts may adopt a probation policy that cannot exceed one

State	Coverage and Definitions	District Role	No Pass No Play Criteria			Period of Ineligibility	Notes/Other
			Academic	Attendance	Conduct		
§ 35160.5	where pupils participating in the program represent the school district, where pupils exercise some degree of freedom in either the selection, planning or control of the program and where the programs include both preparation for performance and performance before an audience or spectators. These activities are not part of the regular curriculum, are not graded, do not offer credit and do not take place during class time. *Cocurricular activities:* Defined as a program that may be associated with the curriculum in a regular classroom.	the state's criteria as a minimum.					semester. Probationary students must be evaluated weekly.
Florida FLA. STAT. CH. 1006.15	*Extracurricular activities:* Defined as any school-authorized or education-related activity occurring during or outside the regular instructional school day.	Districts may impose eligibility criteria other than the state's, but may not reduce access to home school students.	X		X	1 grading period (not explicitly defined)	Students whose cumulative GPA falls below 2.0 must enter into an academic performance contract which must, as a minimum, require the student complete summer school.
Iowa IOWA ADMIN. CODE r. 281-36.15	*Interscholastic extracurricular activities* (not defined)	Districts may impose more strict eligibility criteria than the state's, but must use the state's criteria as a minimum.	X			20 consecutive school days (4 consecutive weeks for baseball/softball	Districts must offer educational support services to students fail or are in risk of failing.

State	Coverage and Definitions	District Role	No Pass No Play Criteria			Period of Ineligibility	Notes/Other
			Academic	Attendance	Conduct		
						if following end of grading period)	
Louisiana LA. REV. STAT. ANN. § 17:176	*Athletic activities* (not defined)	Districts must adhere to the eligibility guidelines established by the Louisiana High School Athletic Association.	X	X		Not defined	
Nevada NEV. ADMIN. CODE CH. 386, §§ 778, 802	*Sanctioned sports:* Defined as any athletic competition that is approved by the Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association.	Districts may impose more strict eligibility criteria than the state's, but must use the state's criteria as a minimum.	X			1 semester	Students may be ineligible for only 9 weeks if immediately following the failed semester they demonstrate 9 continuous weeks of compliance with the requirements. If so, students are placed on weekly probation.
New Mexico N.M. STAT. ANN. § 22-12-2.1	*Interscholastic extracurricular activities* (not defined)	All districts must comply with the state guidelines.	X	X		District determines	The state superintendent may waive the attendance requirement for participation in state or national competitions.
North Carolina N.C. ADMIN.	*Interscholastic athletics* (not defined)	Districts are able to individually establish the "promotion standards"	X			District determines	

State	Coverage and Definitions	District Role	No Pass No Play Criteria			Period of Ineligibility	Notes/Other
			Academic	Attendance	Conduct		
CODE TIT. 16, r. 6E.0202		required for participation.					
Ohio OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3313.535	*Interscholastic extracurricular activities:* Defined as a pupil activity program that a school or district sponsors or participates in and that includes participants from more than one school or school district. It does not include any activity included in the school district's graded course of study.	Districts are able to individually establish the criteria for "minimum GPA" required for participation. Also, districts may exceed the minimum requirements set by the state.	X			District determines	
South Carolina S.C. CODE ANN. § 59-39-160	*Interscholastic activities* (not defined)	Districts may impose more strict eligibility criteria than the state's, but must use the state's criteria as a minimum.	X			Not defined	State board may grant a waiver to students who have been found to have been misinformed by district personnel regarding eligibility requirements.
Texas TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 33.081	*Extracurricular activities:* Defined as an activity sponsored by the University Interscholastic League (UIL), the school district board of trustees, or an organization sanctioned by resolution of the board of trustees. Activities are not necessarily directly related to instruction of the essential knowledge and skills but may have an indirect relation to some areas of the curriculum. Extracurricular activities include, but are not	Districts are required to follow academic eligibility guidelines established by the state.	X			3 weeks	Academic requirements are waived for students in advanced placement or international baccalaureate, or to honors and dual credit courses in core subject areas.

State	Coverage and Definitions	District Role	No Pass No Play Criteria			Period of Ineligibility	Notes/Other
			Academic	Attendance	Conduct		
	limited to, public performances, contests, demonstrations, displays, and club activities. In addition, an activity is subject to the provisions for an extracurricular activity if any one of the following criteria apply: the activity is competitive; the activity is held in conjunction with another activity that is considered to be extracurricular; the activity is held off campus, except in a case in which adequate facilities do not exist on campus; the general public is invited; or an admission is charged.						
West Virginia W. VA. ST. R. § 126-26-3	*Extracurricular activities:* Defined as nonacademic activities such as interscholastic athletics, student government, class officers, marching band that is not a part of the curricular band, and clubs which are not closely related to identifiable programs/areas of study.	Districts are required to follow academic eligibility guidelines established by the state.	X	X		1 semester	Students may become re-eligible mid-semester if they are meeting all eligibility requirements at the time.

II. Table B- No Pass No Play: District-Set Parameters

State	Coverage and Definitions	District Role	No Pass No Play Criteria			Period of Ineligibility	Notes/Other
			Academic	Attendance	Conduct		
Illinois 105 ILL. COMP. STAT. 5/10-20.30	*School-sponsored or school-supported athletic or extracurricular activities* (not defined)	Districts are required to individually establish the criteria for a "minimum GPA" or "minimum course grade" required for participation.	X			District determines	
Kentucky KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 160.345	*Extracurricular activities* (not defined)	Districts are able to individually establish the criteria for "academic qualifications" and "attendance requirements" required for participation.	X	X	X	District determines	
Maryland MD. REGS. CODE TIT. 13A, § 06.03.02	*Interscholastic athletics* (not defined)	Districts are able to individually establish the criteria for "satisfactory progress toward graduation" required for participation and are able to impose stricter eligibility requirements than the state's.	X			District determines	To participate in interscholastic athletics, students must attend a Maryland Public Secondary School Athletic Association member school.

III. Statutory Language Regarding Eligibility Criteria (emphasis added by ECS)

Alabama: Students entering Grades 10-12 must, for the last two semesters of attendance and summer school, if applicable, have **a passing grade** and earn the **appropriate number of credits** in each of six (6) subjects that total six (6) Carnegie units of credit, including four (4) credits from the four (4) core subjects composed of English, science, social studies, and mathematics with a composite numerical average of 70. Students entering Grades 8 and 9 must, for the last two semesters of attendance and summer school, if applicable, have a passing grade in five (5) subjects with a composite numerical average of 70 with all other rules applying the same as to students in Grades 9-12.

Arizona: To be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities, a student shall be required to: 2. Earn a **passing grade** in each course in which the student is enrolled; and 2. Maintain **satisfactory progress toward promotion or graduation**.

California: "Satisfactory educational progress" shall include, but not be limited to, the following: 1. Maintenance of minimum passing grades, which is defined as at least a **2.0 grade point average** in all enrolled courses on a 4.0 scale. 2. Maintenance of **minimum progress** toward meeting the high school graduation requirements prescribed by the governing board.

Florida: To be eligible to participate in interscholastic extracurricular student activities, a student must: 1. Maintain a **grade point average of 2.0** or above on a 4.0 scale, **or its equivalent**, in the previous semester or a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or above on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, in the courses required by s. 1003.43(1). 2. Execute and fulfill the requirements of an **academic performance contract** between the student, the district school board, the appropriate governing association, and the student's parents, if the student's cumulative grade point average falls below 2.0, or its equivalent, on a 4.0 scale in the courses required by s. 1003.43(1) or, for students who entered the 9th grade prior to the 1997-1998 school year, if the student's cumulative grade point average falls below 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, in the courses required by s. 1003.43(1) that are taken after July 1, 1997. At a minimum, the contract must require that the student attend summer school, or its graded equivalent, between grades 9 and 10 or grades 10 and 11, as necessary. 3. Have a cumulative grade point average of **2.0 or above** on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, in the courses required by s. 1003.43(1) during his or her junior or senior year. 4. Maintain **satisfactory conduct** and, if a student is convicted of, or is found to have committed, a felony or a delinquent act which would have been a felony if committed by an adult, regardless of whether adjudication is withheld, the student's participation in interscholastic extracurricular activities is contingent upon established and published district school board policy.

Illinois: The school board of each school district that maintains any of grades 9 through 12 shall establish, implement, and enforce a uniform and consistent policy under which a student in any of those grades who fails to maintain a specified minimum grade point average or a specified minimum grade in each course in which the student is enrolled or both is suspended from further participation in any school-sponsored or school-supported athletic or extracurricular activities for a specified period or until a specified minimum grade point average or minimum grade or both are earned by the student.

Iowa: All contestants shall be enrolled students of the school in good standing. They shall receive credit in at least four subjects, each of one period or "hour" or the equivalent thereof, at all times. Each contestant shall be **passing all coursework** for which credit is given and shall be **making adequate progress** toward graduation requirements at the end of each grading period.

Kentucky: The school council shall adopt a policy to be implemented by the principal in the following additional areas: …8. Selection of extracurricular programs and determination of policies relating to student participation based on academic qualifications and attendance requirements, program evaluation, and supervision.

Louisiana: The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall adopt a policy no later than March 31, 1985 which as a minimum shall require that the 1984 Scholastic Rule of the Louisiana High School Athletic Association be adhered to by all high schools under its jurisdiction. The Board is further directed to review the policy of the Association on an annual basis and adopt such rules as are necessary to insure that these minimum standards are maintained or upgraded.

Maryland: Each local school system shall establish standards of participation which assure that students involved in interscholastic athletics are making satisfactory progress toward graduation.

Nevada: For each semester a pupil participates in a sanctioned sport, the pupil must enroll in a course of at least two units of credit and **regularly attend** a school. The pupil must **successfully complete a course of at least two units of**

credit for the immediately preceding semester. If a pupil fails to complete successfully the course for that semester, he is ineligible to participate in a sanctioned sport for one semester unless, for the grading period for the first nine weeks of the semester that is conducted immediately after that semester, he receives a passing grade for the two units of credit for the grading period, at which time he must be placed on weekly probation.

New Mexico: A student shall have a **2.0 grade point average** on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, either cumulatively or for the grading period immediately preceding participation, in order to be eligible to participate in any interscholastic extracurricular activity. For purposes of this section, "grading period" is a period of time not less than six weeks. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to special education students placed in class C and class D programs. No student shall be **absent from school** for school-sponsored interscholastic extracurricular activities **in excess of fifteen days per semester**, and no class may be missed in excess of fifteen times per semester.

North Carolina: In grades 9-12, the student must **pass at least 75% of the maximum of possible courses** each semester and **meet promotion standards** established by the LEA.

Ohio: Not later than July 1, 1998, the board of education of each city, local, exempted village, and joint vocational school district shall adopt rules requiring students in grades 7-12 to attain a minimum grade point average, to be established by the board, as a condition for such students to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities. Not later than July 1, 1998, the board of education shall adopt a policy either prohibiting any student from participating in any interscholastic extracurricular activity, or allowing any student to so participate, if the student has received a **failing grade for any class or course** in the school district's graded course of study for the previous grading period.

South Carolina: To participate in interscholastic activities, students in grades 9-12 must achieve an **overall passing average** and either: 1. **Pass at least four academic courses**, including each unit the student takes that is required for graduation; or 2. **Pass a total of five academic courses**. Students must satisfy these conditions in the semester preceding participation in the interscholastic activity, if the interscholastic activity occurs completely within one semester or in the semester preceding the first semester of participation in an interscholastic activity if the interscholastic activity occurs over two consecutive semesters and is under the jurisdiction of the South Carolina High School League.

Texas: A student who is enrolled in a school district in this state or who participates in a University Interscholastic League competition shall be suspended from participation in any extracurricular activity sponsored or sanctioned by the school district or the University Interscholastic League after a grade evaluation period in which the student received a **grade lower than the equivalent of 70 on a scale of 100 in any academic class** other than a course described by Subsection (d-1). Subsections (c) and (d) do not apply to an advanced placement or international baccalaureate course, or to an honors or dual credit course in the subject areas of English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, or a language other than English.

West Virginia: A student is required to do **passing work** in the equivalent of at least 20 periods **(four subjects with full credit toward graduation)** per week. Failure to earn passing marks in four full credit subjects during a semester shall render a student ineligible for the following semester.

Michael Colasanti is a researcher with the ECS Information Clearinghouse

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

[1] Lipscomb, Stephen. 2006. *Secondary School Extracurricular Involvement and Academic Achievement: A Fixed Effects Approach.* Economics of Education Review 26, pg. 463-472.
[2] *ibid.*

StateNotes

Finance / State Budgets

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Cost Per-Day for Extended School Year

By Michael Griffith

February 2008

Cost Per-Day Estimations

Extending the school year has become a topic of interest to many state and federal policymakers. Prior to deciding to extend the school year it is important for policymakers to understand the associated costs. The school year runs about 180 days in most states, but for teachers the year is longer due to inservice and other non-student contact days. Data from the U.S. Department of Education show 66% of total education expenditures go toward instruction costs; however, this amount varies from state to state.

The table below gives a rough estimate of the total cost and the instructional cost of school operation in each state. Caution: This is a rough estimate; there are a number of constraints outside the scope of this StateNote to be considered when calculating a real amount for analytical purposes.

	Length of School Year	Estimated Expenditures for Public Schools For 2006-07	Estimated Total Cost Per Day	Instructional Expenditures as a % of Total Expenditures	Estimated Instructional Cost Per Day
Alabama	175	$5,673,616,000	$32,420,663	64.3%	$20,846,486
Alaska	180	$1,380,530,000	$7,669,611	62.5%	$4,793,507
Arizona	175	$5,888,332,000	$33,647,611	62.4%	$20,996,110
Arkansas	178	$4,050,028,000	$22,752,966	65.9%	$14,994,205
California	180	$55,511,744,000	$308,398,578	67.1%	$206,935,446
Colorado	170	$7,063,139,000	$41,547,876	62.3%	$25,884,327
Connecticut	180	$7,461,678,000	$41,453,767	67.1%	$27,815,477
Delaware*	180	$1,536,293,000	$8,534,961	62.4%	$5,325,816
District of Columbia	180	$979,612,000	$5,442,289	61.1%	$3,325,239
Florida	180	$22,624,018,000	$125,688,989	65.4%	$82,200,599
Georgia	180	$14,335,118,000	$79,639,544	68.8%	$54,792,007
Hawaii	183	$1,885,019,000	$10,300,650	65.6%	$6,757,227
Idaho	170	$1,919,802,000	$11,292,953	65.8%	$7,430,763
Illinois	185	$22,037,871,000	$119,123,627	63.9%	$76,119,998
Indiana	180	$9,659,508,000	$53,663,933	63.8%	$34,237,589
Iowa	180	$3,933,003,000	$21,850,017	66.0%	$14,421,011
Kansas	186	$4,146,612,000	$22,293,613	64.0%	$14,267,912
Kentucky*	180	$5,469,063,000	$30,383,683	65.7%	$19,962,080
Louisiana	177	$5,851,062,000	$33,056,847	65.2%	$21,553,065
Maine	180	$2,361,939,000	$13,121,883	70.2%	$9,211,562
Maryland	180	$8,764,940,000	$48,694,111	69.3%	$33,745,019
Massachusetts	180	$12,870,218,000	$71,501,211	69.4%	$49,621,841

	Length of School Year	Estimated Expenditures for Public Schools For 2006-07	Estimated Total Cost Per Day	Instructional Expenditures as a % of Total Expenditures	Estimated Instructional Cost Per Day
Michigan	185	$17,704,565,000	$95,700,351	61.8%	$59,142,817
Minnesota*	180	$8,404,587,000	$46,692,150	69.7%	$32,544,429
Mississippi	180	$3,392,666,000	$18,848,144	64.7%	$12,194,749
Missouri	174	$7,339,896,000	$42,183,310	65.1%	$27,461,335
Montana	180	$1,253,854,000	$6,965,856	65.0%	$4,527,806
Nebraska*	180	$2,385,974,000	$13,255,411	67.2%	$8,907,636
Nevada	180	$2,969,158,000	$16,495,322	66.4%	$10,952,894
New Hampshire	180	$2,221,731,000	$12,342,950	68.0%	$8,393,206
New Jersey	180	$20,377,229,000	$113,206,828	62.6%	$70,867,474
New Mexico	180	$2,968,830,000	$16,493,500	60.9%	$10,044,542
New York	180	$39,914,079,000	$221,744,883	71.2%	$157,882,357
North Carolina	180	$11,225,216,000	$62,362,311	66.7%	$41,595,662
North Dakota	173	$786,605,000	$4,546,850	62.8%	$2,855,422
Ohio	182	$19,705,080,000	$108,269,670	63.6%	$68,859,510
Oklahoma	180	$4,526,694,000	$25,148,300	60.5%	$15,214,722
Oregon*	180	$5,059,393,000	$28,107,739	63.3%	$17,792,199
Pennsylvania	180	$20,588,194,000	$114,378,856	65.5%	$74,918,150
Rhode Island	180	$1,866,520,000	$10,369,556	68.9%	$7,144,624
South Carolina	180	$6,396,072,000	$35,533,733	65.9%	$23,416,730
South Dakota	170	$990,783,000	$5,828,135	63.2%	$3,683,382
Tennessee	180	$6,896,413,000	$38,313,406	69.5%	$26,627,817
Texas	180	$36,836,951,000	$204,649,728	65.8%	$134,659,521
Utah	180	$2,696,707,000	$14,981,706	68.4%	$10,247,487
Vermont	175	$1,239,093,000	$7,080,531	67.7%	$4,793,520
Virginia	180	$12,033,240,000	$66,851,333	67.6%	$45,191,501
Washington	180	$8,977,812,000	$49,876,733	64.2%	$32,020,863
West Virginia	180	$2,832,919,000	$15,738,439	64.3%	$10,119,816
Wisconsin	180	$9,145,695,000	$50,809,417	66.4%	$33,737,453
Wyoming	175	$1,127,688,000	$6,443,931	64.5%	$4,156,336

*These states do not have a statewide policy for the number of days in the school year. 180 days was used for calculations.

How the Information in this chart was calculated:

Total Cost Per Day: Total expenditures divided by the number of school days.
Instructional Cost Per Day: Total expenditures divided by number of school days multiplied by the instructional expenditures as a percentage of total expenditures.

Sources of Information:

Length of School Year
National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics Tables and Figures 2005.* Washington, DC: NCES 2004. http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d05/tables/dt05_123.asp (Accessed January 2007)

Estimated Expenditure for Public Schools (2006-07)
National Education Association, *Rankings & Estimates: Rankings of the States 2006 and Estimates of School Statistics 2007.* (Summary Table K). Washington, DC: NEA December 2007. http://www.nea.org/edstats/images/07rankings.pdf (Accessed January 2008)

Instructional Costs As A Percentage of Total Educational Costs
National Center for Education Statistics, Overview of Public Elementary and Secondary Students, Staff, Schools, School Districts, Revenues, and Expenditures: School Year 2004-05 and Fiscal Year 2004 Washington, DC: NCES November 2006.
http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/overview04/tables/table_8CT.asp?referer=table

This is an update and expansion of a Statenote completed in January, 2007 by Stephanie Fonda, an intern in the ECS Information Clearinghouse.

Michael Griffith is a School Finance Analyst with the Education Commission of the States

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

StateNotes

Finance – Early / Middle Colleges

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 801 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Issues in Funding Early & Middle College High Schools

By Michael Griffith

March 2008

Several states are attempting to ease students' post-high school transition periods through the use of "early" or "middle" college programs. Early and middle colleges allow students to earn a high school diploma free of cost while gaining postsecondary credit in a small school environment. While early and middle college programs have many similarities, there are some differences:

- Early college high schools can be located on a college campus, inside a traditional high school, or on their own campus, and are often focused on serving low-income and/or minority populations. They are established with the goal that every student will earn an associate's degree, technical certification or enough credits to enter a four-year institution as a junior.

- Middle colleges are located on college campuses and tend to target students who are at risk of dropping out. They do not have the goal that students will earn up to two years of college credit but they do allow students to gain more postsecondary credit than otherwise received in a traditional dual enrollment program.

Early/Middle Colleges vs. Traditional Dual Enrollment Programs

Like early/middle colleges, traditional dual enrollment programs allow students to earn college credit while attending high school. However, there are differences between traditional dual enrollment programs and early/middle colleges. Among these differences are:

- Program structure
  - A student's ability to participate in a dual enrollment program, and the size and scope of the program varies from district to district.
  - Early/middle college programs are highly structured and provide the same level of service to each student.

- Age of participating students
  - In many states students are not allowed to attend postsecondary classes until they enter 11th grade.
  - Early/middle colleges allow students to begin to participate in postsecondary courses in 9th grade.

- Students who are targeted
    - Dual enrollment programs are often targeted to mid to high achieving students.
    - Early/middle colleges are targeted toward students who are not being well served by traditional high schools including, but not limited to, at-risk and minority students.

- Higher education credits earned
    - In dual enrollment programs, the number of higher education credits earned varies by student needs and skill level. In addition, some states set a cap on the maximum number of credits a student may earn while enrolled in a dual enrollment program.
    - The goal for students completing an early college program is to receive their Associate's degree upon high school graduation. Middle college programs are designed to allow students to gain some college credits.

New Programs Require New Funding Systems

Because early and middle colleges allow students to gain both high school and postsecondary credit simultaneously they have different funding needs than traditional high schools or dual enrollment programs. The Education Commission of the States (ECS) conducted a review of all fifty states' legislation and rules to determine which states had established early/middle college programs. ECS' review found that seven states (California, Colorado, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and Texas) have specific state-level policies that allow for the establishment of early/middle colleges. To help determine how state funding systems for early/middle colleges differ from funding programs for traditional schools, ECS reviewed the funding policies for these seven states. This review focused on three education funding issues in particular:

- How does the state fund early/middle colleges compared to traditional high schools?
- Does the state provide additional funding to the higher education institution where students are earning their postsecondary education credits?
- Is a student required to pay tuition?

Findings

Funding to High Schools:
Pennsylvania is the only state surveyed that does not provide funding to early/middle colleges equal to the funding amounts it provides to traditional high schools in every circumstance. Pennsylvania provides early/middle colleges with funding amounts that are equal to traditional high schools if the early/middle college pays student tuition costs. Early/middle colleges not covering tuition costs receive a reduced amount of state funding.

Funding to Higher Education Institutions:
Of the states surveyed, North Carolina and Pennsylvania did not provide an equal amount of funding for students enrolled in an early/middle college program and for the students enrolled in a traditional higher education program. In North Carolina, a student enrolled in an early/middle college program would receive funding equal to the funding provided to a student enrolled in a traditional postsecondary program, as long as the course is taught by a college/university professor. If the course is taught by a high school teacher, the early/middle college would receive a reduced amount of funding. Pennsylvania provides an equal amount of funding, unless the early/middle college has an agreement to pay a higher education provider an amount above a limit set by the state.

Tuition:
California and Pennsylvania allow schools to pay students' tuition, but do not require it. Michigan requires early/middle colleges to pay for tuition costs that are equal to the amount of funding that they receive from the state for the portion of the school day that the student is attending postsecondary courses. If the tuition payment from the early/middle college does not cover the full cost of tuition, students are required to pay the remaining amount. The other four states surveyed mandate that students not be charged for tuition costs.

	Does the State Have A Policy For:		**How Does the State Fund Early/Middle Colleges Compared To:**		
	Early College	Middle College	Traditional High Schools	Traditional Higher Education Institutions	**Does A Student Have to Pay Tuition Costs?**
California	No	Yes	Equal	Equal	Varies (See State Write-up)
Colorado	Yes	No	Equal	Equal	No
Michigan	Yes	Yes	Equal	Equal	Varies (See State Write-up)
North Carolina	Yes	No	Equal	Varies (See State Write-up)	No
Pennsylvania	Yes	Yes	Equal (See State Write-up)	Equal (See State Write-up)	Varies (See State Write-up)
Tennessee	Yes	No	Equal	Equal	No
Texas	Yes	Yes	Equal	Equal	No

Conclusion

Based on this review, it appears that each of the seven states with state-level early/middle college policies adjusted its funding formula to address the uniqueness of these programs. These adjustments attempt to ensure that early/middle colleges are funded at the same level as traditional high schools for their secondary education programs and that funding for higher education courses equals what state postsecondary institutions receive. In addition, all seven states adopted policies that mandate or encourage free postsecondary tuition for students attending early/middle colleges. Policymakers who wish to establish early/middle colleges in their state may want to ensure that the same adjustments are made to their K-12 and higher education funding formulas so that they can maximize the impact of these programs.

Individual State Profiles

California
Middle College High Schools

State Funding for Secondary Schools
If the student is enrolled in the secondary school program for at least 240 hours, the middle college will receive full state funding for that student. State law: § 48802

State Postsecondary Funding
Middle college high school students are treated no differently from traditional community college students for state funding purposes. State law: § 48800.5(e) & § 76001(c).

Tuition
The community college does have the right to waive the cost of tuition for a student enrolled in a middle college program, but it is not required to do so. If tuition costs are not waived by the community college, it is the responsibility of the student to pay them. California Education Code: §76300(f).

Colorado
Fast College Fast Jobs

State Funding For Secondary Schools
An early college would receive full state funding for all students enrolled in this program taking fewer than 11 college credits. If a student is taking 12 or more credits, the early college would only receive 85% of state funding. State law: § 22-35.5-107(1)

State Postsecondary Funding
Students enrolled in the “Fast College Fast Jobs” program are treated no differently from traditional community college students for state funding purposes. State Regulations: Section V, Part B, 5.01.05.

Tuition
The students' postsecondary tuition costs are paid by their school district. The school district in which the early college is located can negotiate with the postsecondary institution for a lower tuition rate for its students. State law: § 22-35.5-107(2)

Michigan
Early/Middle Colleges through the *Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act*

State Funding for Secondary Schools
Students enrolled in an early/middle college program are counted the same for funding purposes as students enrolled in traditional high schools. State Law: § 388.1606(6)(4)(q)

State Postsecondary Funding
The state discontinued the use of student counts for higher education funding for the 2007-08 school year — therefore funding for students in early/middle colleges does not differ from funding for traditional postsecondary students. House Bill 4350 – 2007.

Tuition
An early/middle college is only responsible for paying the portion of a student's tuition that is equal to the pro-rated amount of funding received from the state for the portion of the school day that the student attends postsecondary courses. An early/middle college can provide additional funding but it is not required to. Any tuition costs that are not covered by the early/middle college are the responsibility of the student. State Law: § 388.1621b(3)

North Carolina

Cooperative Innovative High School Programs

State Funding for Secondary Schools

Early colleges are treated no differently from traditional high schools for funding purposes even if they are physically located in another high school or at a postsecondary institution. State law: § 115C-238.54(a).

State Postsecondary Funding

If taught in association with a community college: If a community college (C.C.) has contracted with a school district to help run an early college and it uses C.C. professors to teach the dual credit courses, the C.C. would receive full state funding for that course. If the C.C. uses high school teachers to teach the course, the C.C. would only receive a state reimbursement that is equal to the direct cost of the course plus 15%. State law: § 115D-41.

If taught in association with a public four-year university: If a University of North Carolina institution's professor teaches the course, the early college may claim full funding from the state. If the course is taught by a high school teacher, the early college will not receive state funding. From the University of North Carolina's *Student Credit Hour Enrollment Change Funding Model Manual*.

Tuition

Community colleges are required to waive tuition cost for students enrolled in an early college high school program. State law: § 115D-5(b)

At a four-year university, it is the responsibility of the student's early college high school to pay his/her tuition and fees. UNC Policy: 400.6.1[R] – 15

Pennsylvania

Early/Middle Colleges Through the Opportunities For Educational Excellence Program

State Funding For Secondary Schools

An early/middle college would receive full state funding for a student if the college pays the student's postsecondary tuition and fees. If the early/middle college does not pay the student's tuition and fees, it would receive a prorated amount of state funding based on the amount of time the student spent in the classroom. State law: 22 Pa. Code § 11.5

State Postsecondary Funding

For students enrolled in community college programs: Students who are enrolled in a early/middle college program are treated the same as traditional students for state funding purposes. The only exception to this is if an early/middle college enters into an agreement with a community college providing the community college with district funding for dual enrollment students that exceeds the additional cost of the program. State law: 22 Pa. Code § 35.61

For students enrolled in four-year higher education programs: Students who are enrolled in an early or middle college program are treated the same as traditional students for state funding purposes. From a review of the 2007-2008 Pennsylvania state budget.

Tuition

Early/middle colleges may choose to pay their students' postsecondary tuition and fees. If the school does not pay, it is the responsibility of the student to pay for his/her own tuition and fees, but the student may qualify for a complete or partial reimbursement through the state's Opportunities for Educational Excellence Program. State law: 24 P.S. § 16-1603-B

Tennessee

Cooperative Innovative High School Programs

State Funding For Secondary Schools

Students enrolled in a early college are funded at the same level as students enrolled in traditional high schools. State law: § 49-15-107(a)

State Postsecondary Funding

Students enrolled in an early college program are treated no differently from traditional postsecondary students for state funding purposes. State law: § 49-15-106(f)

Tuition

A student participating in this program cannot be charged tuition or fees. State law: § 49-15-107(f)

Texas

Middle/Early College Program

State Funding For Secondary Schools

Students enrolled in early/middle colleges are funded at the same level as students enrolled in traditional high schools. State law: § 29.908(c) and § 42.005

State Postsecondary Funding

Students enrolled in an early/middle college program are treated no differently from traditional postsecondary students for state funding purposes. State Regulations: 19 TAC § 4.160

Tuition

A student participating in an early/middle college cannot be charged tuition or fees. Tuition and fees will be covered by the early/middle college unless the postsecondary school is willing to waive or reduce these costs. State Rules: §102.1091(d)(3)

Michael Griffith is a school finance analyst with the ECS Clearinghouse. He can be reached at mgriffith@ecs.org

Equipping Education Leaders, Advancing Ideas

StateNotes

Governance
State Boards / Chiefs / Agencies

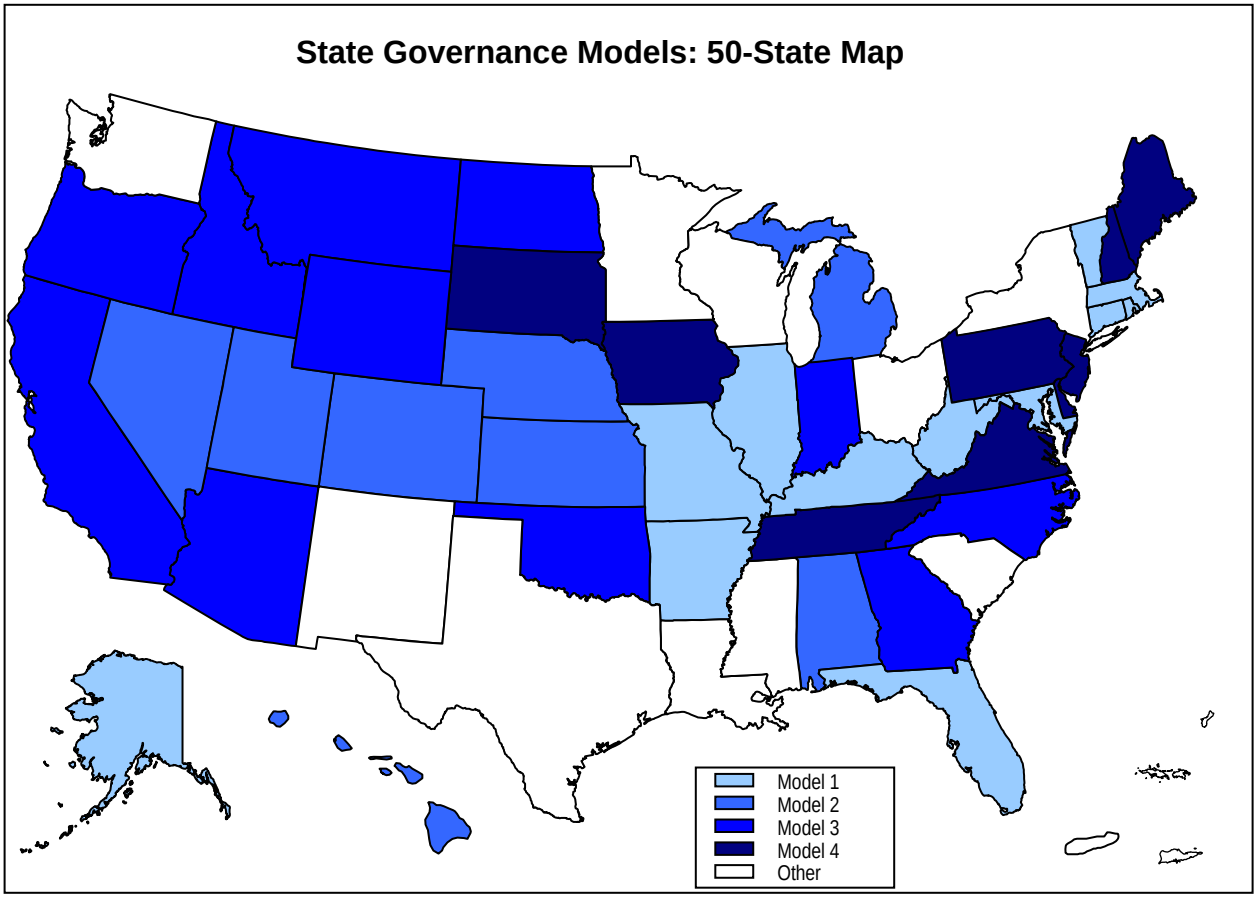
Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 801 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

State Education Governance Models

Updated and Revised by Mary Fulton
March 2008
(Original version, Todd Ziebarth, 2004)

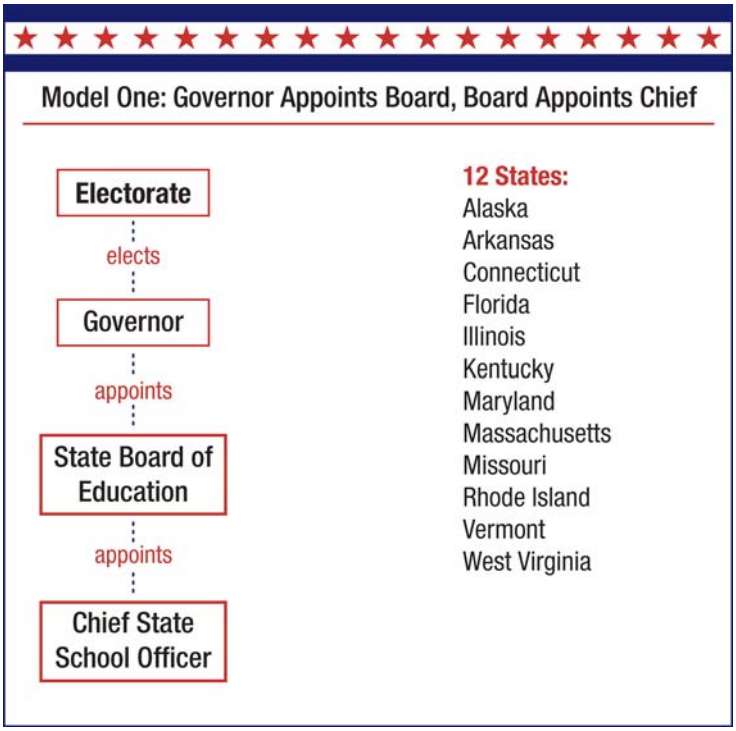
Education governance structures differ from state to state and directly affect how education policy leaders interact. Understanding the differences between structures can help explain the education policy process in terms of how decisions are made and the how authority is divided.

State education governance structures can be categorized into one of four general models that describe how state boards of education are constituted and whether the chief state school officer is appointed or elected. Forty of the 50 states fall into one of these categories; the other 10 states, plus the District of Columbia, have governance structures that are modified versions of the four general models.



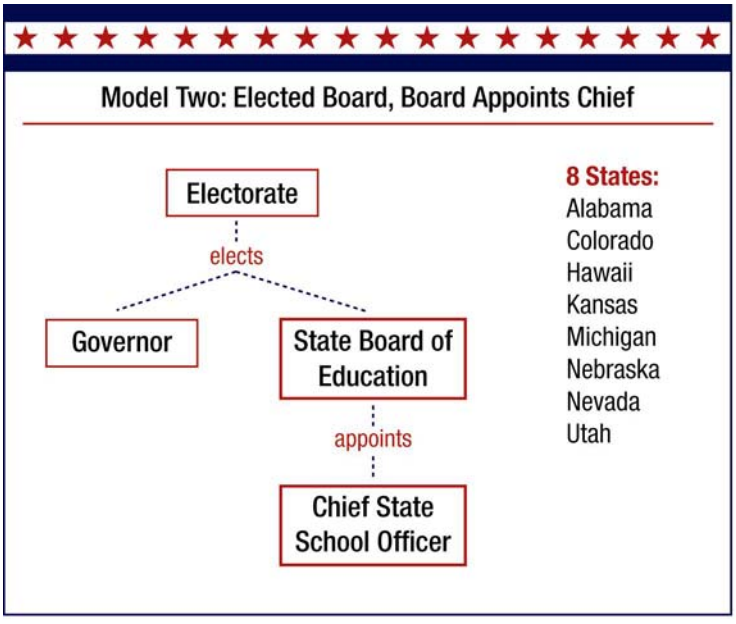
Model One

In this model, the governor appoints the members of the state board of education. The state board, in turn, appoints the chief state school officer. Model One includes 12 states: **Alaska, Arkansas, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Rhode Island, Vermont and West Virginia**.



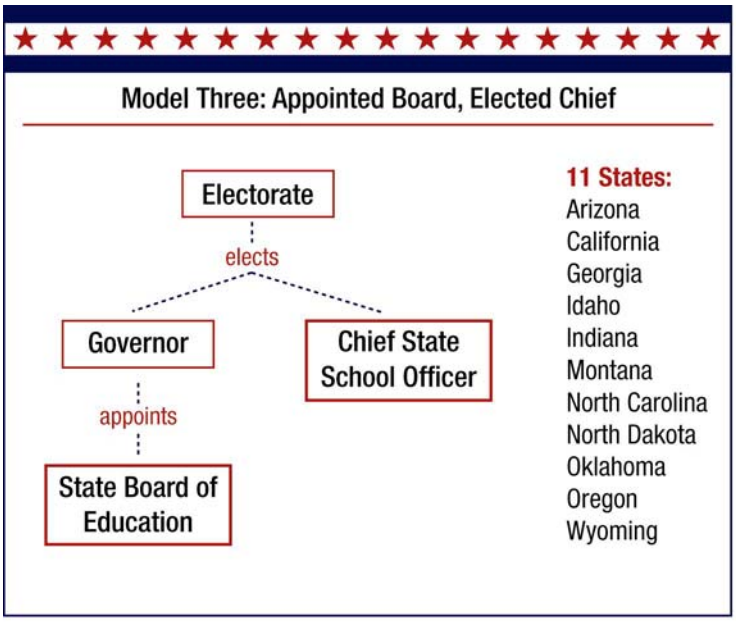
Model Two

In this model, the state board of education is elected and the board appoints the chief state school officer. Eight states fall into Model Two: **Alabama, Colorado, Hawaii, Kansas, Michigan, Nebraska, Nevada and Utah**.



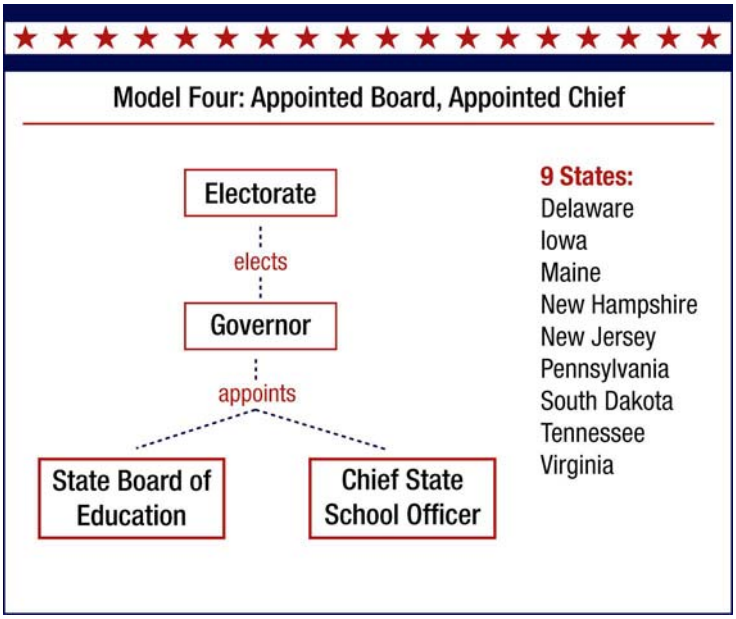
Model Three

In this model, the governor appoints the members of state board of education. The chief state school officer is elected. Model Three includes 11 states: **Arizona, California, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Montana, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon and Wyoming**. In three of these states – Arizona, Indiana and Oklahoma – the chief state school officer also is a voting member of the state board of education.



Model Four

In this model, the governor appoints the state board of education and the chief state school officer. There are nine Model Four states: **Delaware, Iowa, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee and Virginia**.



Other Models

The remaining 10 states plus the District of Columbia function under modified versions of the above four models.

Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas, Washington, Wisconsin and the District of Columbia

A. ***Elected and Appointed State Board; Appointed Chief***
In **Louisiana**, eight board members are elected and three are appointed by the governor. In **Ohio**, 11 board members are elected, while the governor appoints eight members.

B. ***Legislature Appoints State Board; Appointed or Elected Chief***
In **New York**, the state legislature appoints the board members and the chief state school officer is appointed by the board. The **South Carolina** legislature appoints the board, but the chief is elected.

C. ***Joint Appointment of State Board; Appointed or Elected Chief***
The governor, lieutenant governor and the speaker of the House appoint members to the state board in **Mississippi.** The state board appoints the chief state school officer.

In the state of **Washington**, the board of education is made up of 16 members — five of whom are elected by district directors (three for the western half of the state, two for the eastern); one at-large member elected by members of boards of directors of state-approved private schools; the superintendent of public instruction; seven members appointed by the governor; and two student members (non-voting). The chief state school officer is elected. Washington moved from a model whereby the state board was elected by district directors (local boards) to this model in January 2006.

D. ***Elected Board; Governor Appointed Chief***
The governor appoints the chief state school officer who also serves as the executive secretary of the elected state board. **Texas** uses this model.

E. ***No State Board or Advisory Only; Elected or Appointed Chief***
Minnesota and **Wisconsin** do not have a state board of education. New Mexico has an elected body (Public Education Commission), but is advisory only.
Minnesota and New Mexico – chief state school officer is appointed by governor
Wisconsin – chief state school officer is elected.

The **District of Columbia** has a state board of education that is advisory only. Five of the members are elected and four are appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the city council. Beginning in January 2009, all nine members will be elected. The District of Columbia Public Education Reform Amendment Act of 2007 created a new state board of education that advises the state superintendent and approves specified policies. Previously, the board oversaw day-to-day operations of schools. This act also gave the mayor primary responsibility for public education.

Territories
Puerto Rico currently maintains an educational model in which the chief state school officer is appointed by the governor. In the **Virgin Islands**, the board of education consists of nine elected members and the chief state school officer is appointed by the governor.

Summary: State Boards of Education

Appointed by Governor (32 states)
Alaska, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia and Wyoming

Elected (9 states)
Alabama, Colorado, Hawaii, Kansas, Michigan, Nebraska, Nevada, Texas and Utah

Appointed and Elected (2 states and D.C.)
Louisiana and Ohio; District of Columbia (advisory only)

Appointed by Legislature (2 states)
New York and South Carolina

Appointed by Multiple Authorities (2 states)
Mississippi and Washington

No State Board or Advisory Only (3 states and D.C.)
Minnesota and Wisconsin (no board); New Mexico and District of Columbia (advisory only)

Summary: Chief State School Officers

Appointed by Governor (13 states and D.C.)
Delaware, Florida, Iowa, Maine, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. The District of Columbia mayor appoints the chief state school officer.

Appointed by State Board of Education (23 states)
Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Louisiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, Ohio, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont and West Virginia

Elected (14 states)
Arizona, California, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Montana, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, Washington, Wisconsin and Wyoming

Governors' Cabinets with Education Representation

According to state Web sites, at least 25 governors appoint an education official to the executive cabinet. Such officials may be the superintendent of education, commissioner of education or secretary of education. These states include: **California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia** and **West Virginia**. In addition, the state superintendent of education for the **District of Columbia** serves on the mayor's cabinet.

Dual Offices for Education

Four states and the District of Columbia maintain a governance model that includes two authoritative positions for the state educational system:

- **California** has a Secretary of Education and also a Superintendent of Public Instruction who serves on the governor's cabinet. (*CAL. EDUC. CODE* §*33100 to 33191; CA. CONST. ART I, §2 and §7)*

- **Kentucky** has a Secretary of Education and a Commissioner of Education. (*KY. REV. STAT. ANN.§§156.147 to 156.250*)
- **Massachusetts** has a Secretary of Education and a Commissioner of Education. (*Mass. ANN. Laws ch.27.§§14A.*)
- **Virginia** supports a Secretary of Education (a cabinet position) and a Superintendent of Public Instruction. (*VA CODE ANN.§22.1-21 to 22.1-24 and 2.2-200*)
- **District of Columbia** has a State Superintendent of Education and a Chancellor of Education, both appointed by the mayor. District of Columbia Public Education Reform Amendment Act of 2007. (*D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)*)

Mary Fulton is a policy analyst with the ECS Information Clearinghouse.

Equipping Education Leaders, Advancing Ideas

StateNotes

Religion

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 801 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

School Prayer, Moment of Silence, Other Policies Concerning Religion

Update by Michael Colasanti
March 2008

Religion in public schools is an issue that is analyzed through the lens of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which provides, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." The government, including public school officials, must act neutrally with respect to religious expression in schools, and can neither favor religion(s) nor discriminate against them.[1]

When religious expression in public schools is voluntarily initiated by students, the First Amendment protects their right to express themselves. The government cannot enact policies that restrict or prohibit voluntary religious expression on the part of students. For example, students desiring to form a school-sanctioned Bible study group must be afforded the same rights and access that a non-religious group has. On the other hand, the government is prohibited from establishing a religion or favoring specific religious expression, and controversies are typically analyzed by the courts using what is known as the "Lemon test", established in the Supreme Court case of *Lemon vs. Kurtzman*, 403 U.S. 602. The Lemon test poses three questions when analyzing a specific policy: does the statute have a secular purpose, is its principal or primary effect to either advance or inhibit religion and does the provision foster an excessive government entanglement with religion? If any of these questions are answered affirmatively, the statute must be overturned.

The first three tables that follow are 50-state reviews of state-level policies concerning certain aspects of religion in public schools. The last table includes examples of state statutes overturned due to violations of the 1st Amendment. Highlights in this *StateNote* include:

- Thirty-four states either require or permit **prayer, moments of silence, meditation, reflection** at the start of or during class. Thirteen states require all schools to participate, 10 states allow the students/teachers the option to participate, seven states give discretion to the local district board to make the decision and four states allow voluntary participation by students/teachers but also authorize local districts to require participation.
- Four states allow the posting of the **Ten Commandments** in public schools (Table II).
- Seven states allow the teaching of religion and/or the **Bible in classrooms** (Table III).
- Highlights of state statutes (related to the topics above) ruled unconstitutional due to violations of the 1st (and 14th) Amendments to the Constitution (Table IV).

To see information on policies concerning the teaching of evolution, please see the ECS *StateNote* titled, *Policies Dealing with Evolution in Select States.*

Table I – Policies on Prayer, Moments of Silence, Meditation, Reflection, etc. During Class

State	Citation	Summary	Last Known Revision
Alabama	ALA. CODE § 16-1-20.4	At the start of each day and at the beginning of every athletic event and graduation ceremony, teachers/administrators must conduct a brief period of quiet reflection for one minute. "The moment of quiet reflection… is not intended to be and shall not be conducted as a religious service or exercise, but shall be considered an opportunity for a moment of silent reflection on the anticipated activities of the day or event."	2001
Arizona	ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 15-342	School district governing boards may "require a period of silence to be observed at the commencement of the first class of the day in the schools. If a governing board chooses to require a period of silence to be observed, the teacher in charge of the room in which the first class is held shall announce that a period of silence not to exceed one minute in duration will be observed for meditation, and during that time no activities shall take place and silence shall be maintained."	1995
Arkansas	ARK. CODE ANN. § 6-10-115	"The teacher in charge of each public school classroom may, or if so directed by the board of directors of the school district in which the teacher is employed, shall, at the opening of school on each school day, conduct a brief period of silence with the participation of all students in the classroom who desire to participate."	1995
Connecticut	CONN. GEN. STAT. § 10-16a	"Each local or regional board of education shall provide opportunity at the start of each school day to allow those students and teachers who wish to do so, the opportunity to observe such time in silent meditation."	Unknown
Delaware	DEL. CODE ANN. TIT. 14, § 4101A	At the start of each day, all students may be granted a period of silence, not more than two minutes long, to be used "according to the dictates of the individual conscience of each student."	1995
Florida	FLA. STAT. CH. 1003.45	"The district school board may provide that a brief period, not to exceed two minutes, for the purpose of silent prayer or meditation be set aside at the start of each school day or each school week in the public schools in the district."	Unknown

State	Citation	Summary	Last Known Revision
Georgia	GA. CODE ANN. § 20-2-1050	"In each public school classroom, the teacher in charge shall, at the opening of school upon every school day, conduct a brief period of quiet reflection for not more than 60 seconds with the participation of all the pupils therein assembled. The moment of quiet reflection… is not intended to be and shall not be conducted as a religious service or exercise but shall be considered as an opportunity for a moment of silent reflection on the anticipated activities of the day."	1994
Illinois	105 ILL. COMP. STAT. 20/1	"In each public school classroom the teacher in charge shall observe a brief period of silence with the participation of all the pupils therein assembled at the opening of every school day. This period shall not be conducted as a religious exercise but shall be an opportunity for silent prayer or for silent reflection on the anticipated activities of the day."	2007
Indiana	IND. CODE § 20-30-5-4.5	Each local board must "establish the daily observance of a moment of silence in each classroom or on school grounds." During the moment of silence… the teacher responsible for a classroom shall ensure… that each student may, in the exercise of the student's individual choice, meditate, pray, or engage in any other silent activity."	2005
Kansas	KAN. STAT. ANN. § 72-5308a	"In each public school classroom the teacher in charge may observe a brief period of silence with the participation of all the pupils… at the opening of every school day. This period shall not be conducted as a religious exercise but [as] an opportunity for silent prayer or for silent reflection on the anticipated activities of the day."	1969
Kentucky	KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 158.175	Teachers may conduct a period of silence or reflection not to exceed one minute. "The board of education of a local school district may authorize the recitation of the traditional Lord's prayer and the pledge of allegiance to the flag in public elementary schools. Pupil participation in the recitation of the prayer and pledge of allegiance shall be voluntary… The exercises shall be conducted so that pupils shall learn of our great freedoms, including the freedom of religion symbolized by the recitation of the Lord's prayer."	2000

State	Citation	Summary	Last Known Revision
Louisiana	LA. REV. STAT. § 17:2115	"Each parish, city, and other local public school board in the state shall permit the proper school authorities of each school within its jurisdiction to allow an opportunity, at the start of each school day, for those students and teachers desiring to do so to observe a brief time in silent prayer or meditation."	2002
Maine	ME. REV. STAT. ANN. TIT. 20-A § 4805	"The school board of a school administrative unit may require, at the commencement of the first class of each day in all grades in all public schools in their unit, that the teacher in charge of the room in which each class is held shall announce that a period of silence shall be observed for reflection or meditation and during that period silence shall be maintained and no activities engaged in."	Unknown
Maryland	MD. CODE ANN., EDUC. § 7-104	Principals and teachers may require all students to meditate silently for approximately one minute each day. During this time, a student or teacher may "read the holy scripture or pray."	1978
Massachusetts	MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 71, § 1A	"At the commencement of the first class… teacher in charge of the room in which each such class is held shall announce that a period of silence not to exceed one minute in duration shall be observed for personal thoughts, and during any such period, silence shall be maintained and no activities engaged in."	1985
Michigan	MICH. COMP. LAWS § 380.1565	The board of education of a district may "provide the opportunity during each school day to allow students who wish to do so, the opportunity to observe time in silent meditation."	1977
Minnesota	MINN. STAT. § 121A.10	"A moment of silence may be observed."	1996
Mississippi	MISS. REV. STAT. § 37-13-8	"In each public school classroom, the local school governing board may authorize a brief period of quiet reflection for not more than 60 seconds at the opening of school upon every school day. The moment of quiet reflection… is not intended to be and shall not be conducted as a religious service or exercise but is considered an opportunity for a moment of silent reflection."	2001
Montana	MONT. CODE ANN. § 20-7-112	"Instruction may not be given advocating sectarian or denominational doctrines. However, any teacher or principal may open the school day with a prayer."	1989

State	Citation	Summary	Last Known Revision
Nevada	NEV. REV. STAT. § 388.075	"Every school district shall set aside a period at the beginning of each school day, during which all persons must be silent, for voluntary individual meditation, prayer or reflection by pupils."	1977
New Hampshire	N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 189:1-b	On each school day, a period of not more than five minutes must be available to those who "wish to exercise their right to freedom of assembly and participate voluntarily in the free exercise of religion."	1977
	N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 194:15-a	School districts may authorize the reciting of the traditional Lord's prayer. Student participation is voluntary. "Pupils shall be reminded that this prayer is the prayer our pilgrim fathers recited when they came to this country in their search for freedom."	2002
New Jersey	N.J. STAT. ANN. § 18A:36-4	"Principals and teachers in… this State shall permit students to observe a one minute period of silence to be used solely at the discretion of the individual student, before the opening exercises of each school day for quiet and private contemplation or introspection."	1982
New York	N.Y. EDUC. LAW § 3029-a	Teachers may, or if so directed by the board of education, shall, conduct a brief period of silent meditation at the start of each day, with the participation of all students. Meditation "is not intended to be, and shall not be conducted as, a religious service or exercise, but may be considered as an opportunity for silent meditation."	1971
North Carolina	N.C. GEN. STAT.§ 115C-47	Local boards of education may "adopt a policy to authorize the observance of a moment of silence at the commencement of the first class of each day in all grades in the public schools… Such period of silence shall be totally and completely unstructured and free of guidance or influence of any kind from any sources."	1995
North Dakota	N.D. CENT. CODE § 15.1-19-03.1	"A school board may, by resolution, allow a classroom teacher to impose up to one minute of silence for meditation, reflection, or prayer at the beginning of each schoolday."	2001
Ohio	OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3313.601	The local boards of education may "provide for a moment of silence each school day for prayer, reflection, or meditation upon a moral, philosophical, or patriotic theme." Pupil participation may be excused "if they are contrary to the religious convictions of the pupil or the pupil's parents or guardians."	2001

State	Citation	Summary	Last Known Revision
Oklahoma	OKLA. STAT. TIT. 70, § 11-101.1	"The board of education of each school district shall ensure that the public schools within the district observe approximately one minute of silence each day for the purpose of allowing each student, in the exercise of his or her individual choice, to reflect, meditate, pray."	Unknown
Pennsylvania	24 PA. CONS. STAT. § 15-1516.1	"Teachers may, or if so directed by the board of education, shall… conduct a brief period of silent prayer or meditation with the participation of all pupils."	Unknown
Rhode Island	R.I. GEN. LAWS § 16-12-3.1	"At the opening of every school day the teacher… shall announce that a period of silence not to exceed one minute in duration shall be observed for meditation, and during this period silence shall be maintained and no activities engaged in."	1977
South Carolina	S.C. CODE ANN. § 59-1-443	"All schools shall provide for a minute of mandatory silence at the beginning of each school day."	1995
Tennessee	TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-6-1004	Each grade in public schools is required to maintain a period of silence approximately one minute long "in order for all students and teachers to prepare themselves for the activities of the day." Teachers may permit students or others to participate in voluntary prayer.	1993
Texas	TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 25.082	"The board of trustees of each school district shall provide for the observance of one minute of silence… During the one-minute period, each student may, as the student chooses, reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity that is not likely to interfere with or distract another student."	2003
Utah	UTAH CODE ANN. § 53A-11-901.5	"A teacher may provide for the observance of a period of silence each school day in a public school."	1996
Virginia	VA. CODE ANN. § 22.1-203	Requires school boards to establish daily moments of silence for meditation, prayer or other silent activity in every classroom. "During such one-minute period of silence, the teacher responsible for each classroom shall take care that all pupils remain seated and silent and make no distracting display to the end that each pupil may, in the exercise of his or her individual choice, meditate, pray, or engage in any other silent activity."	2000

Table II – Posting the Ten Commandments in Schools

State	Citation	Summary	Last Known Revision
Indiana	Ind. Code §§ 4-20.5-21-2, 36-1-16-2	The Ten Commandments may be displayed on real property owned by the state or a political subdivision as part of an exhibit displaying other documents of historical significance that formed and influenced the United States legal or governmental system. The display must be "in the same manner and appearance generally as other documents and objects displayed."	2000
North Carolina	N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-81	"A local school administrative unit may display on real property… documents and objects of historical significance that have formed and influenced the United States legal or governmental system and that exemplify the development of the rule of law, such as… the Ten Commandments."	2001
North Dakota	N.D. CENT. CODE § 15.1-06-17.1	"A religious object or document of cultural, legal, or historical significance which has influenced the legal and governmental systems of the United States and this state may be displayed in a public school building together with other objects or documents of cultural, legal, or historical significance… The display of a religious object or document under this section must be in the same manner and appearance generally as other objects and documents displayed."	2001
South Dakota	S.D. CODIFIED LAWS § 13-24-17.1	"An object or document containing the words of the Ten Commandments may be displayed in any public school classroom, public school building, or at any public school event, along with other objects and documents of cultural, legal, or historical significance." The display must be "in the same manner and appearance generally as other objects and documents displayed." .	2000

Table III – Religion as Curriculum

State	Citation	Summary	Last Known Revision
California	CAL. EDUC. CODE § 51511	School boards may permit schools to use religious literature as long it does "not constitute instruction in religious principles or aid to any religious sect, church, creed, or sectarian purpose and when such references or uses are incidental to or illustrative of matters properly included in the course of study."	2001
Florida	Fla. Stat. ch. 1003.45	"The district school board may install in the public schools in the district a secular program of education including, but not limited to, an objective study of the Bible and of religion."	Unknown
Georgia	Ga. Code Ann. § 20-2-148	Public schools with grade nine or above may offer "an elective course in the History and Literature of the Old Testament Era and an elective course in the History and Literature of the New Testament Era."	2006
Mississippi	Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-161	School boards may permit schools to use religious literature as long it does "not constitute instruction in religious principles or aid to any religious sect, church, creed, or sectarian purpose and when such references or uses are incidental to or illustrative of matters properly included in the course of study."	1997
South Carolina	S.C. CODE ANN. § 59-29-230	School district boards of trustees may authorize elective courses "concerning the history and literature of the Old Testament era and an elective course concerning the history and literature of the New Testament era."	2007
Texas	TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 28.011	A school district may offer to students in grade nine or above "an elective course on the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and its impact and an elective course on the New Testament and its impact."	2007

Table IV – Policies Concerning Religion Ruled Unconstitutional

State	Citation	Summary	Last Known Revision
Idaho	IDAHO CODE § 33-1604	Selections from the Bible chosen from a list prepared by the state board of education must be read daily in each classroom, without comment or interpretation. Any questions from pupils are referred to the pupil's parent or guardian. Held unconstitutional in *Adams v. Engelking*, 232 F.Supp. 666 (D. Idaho 1964). The district court in *Adams* ruled this provision unconstitutional under the precedent set by the Supreme Court in the 1963 case of *Abington School District vs. Schempp*, 374 U.S. 203. In *Abington*, the court ruled that no state law or school board may require that biblical passages be read or prayers recited, even if students may be excused from attending or participating.	1963
Kentucky	KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 158.178	The superintendent of public instruction must ensure that a durable, permanent copy of the Ten Commandments is displayed in each public elementary and secondary classroom. Held unconstitutional in *Stone v. Graham*, 449 U.S. 39 (1980). The Supreme Court in *Stone* ruled that the Kentucky statute had "no secular purpose" and therefore violated the Lemon test. The court did not rule out the possibility that government could integrate the commandments into the curriculum, like the Bible; however, the act of posting them was unconstitutional.	1978
Massachusetts	MASS. GEN. LAWS CH. 71, § 31	A portion of the Bible must be read daily in the public schools, without written note or oral comment. Any pupil whose parent or guardian has informed the teacher in writing that he has conscientious scruples against it "shall not be required to read from any particular version, or to take any personal part in the reading." Held unconstitutional in *Waite v. School Committee of Newton*, 202 N.E.2d 109 (1964), citing *Atty. Gen. v. School Committee of North Brookfield*, 199 N.E.2d 553 (1964).	1826
West Virginia	W. Va. Const. Art. III, § 15a	Public schools must provide a designated time at the start of each school day for any student so desiring to exercise their right to personal and private contemplation, meditation or prayer. Held unconstitutional in *Walter v. West Virginia Bd. of*	1984

		Educ., 610 F. Supp. 1169 (S.D.W. 1985). The district court in *Walter* found the W.V. constitutional provision unconstitutional under the U.S. Constitution. Citing the Lemon test, the court stated that "the law under scrutiny does not meet any of the three elements [of Lemon]" and is "violative of the Establishment Clause."	

Michael Colasanti is an associate researcher with the ECS Information Clearinghouse.

Equipping Education Leaders, Advancing Ideas

[1] United States Department of Education. Guidance on Constitutionally Protected Prayer in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools. February 7, 2003. www.ed.gov. (http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/religionandschools/prayer_guidance.html, last accessed 3/20/2008)

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 801 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

School Uniforms and Dress Codes: State Policies

By Michael Colasanti

March 2008

The role state legislatures play in addressing student dress standards is in authorizing schools or districts to implement dress code and school uniform policies. **Twenty-three states** authorize schools and districts to implement dress code and/or uniform policies. In states where no policy exists, it can be assumed that unless explicitly prohibited, schools and districts can require dress codes and/or uniforms. In fact, court rulings and attorney general opinions in an additional **four states** have upheld the right of districts and schools to set dress requirements.

No state requires students to wear uniforms.

One state, Massachusetts, prohibits the use of dress codes unless there are health or safety issues.

The table below answers the following questions:

- **Policy:** Does the state authorize a dress code policy (five states), a school uniform policy (10 states), or both (12 states)?
- **Opt-out:** Does the state policy allow parents to opt-out of participation for their children? (Such opt-outs are usually for religious or philosophical reasons.) Seven states have such policies.
- **Assistance to low socioeconomic status (SES) students:** Does the state policy require that disadvantaged and low SES students receive financial support for purchasing the uniforms? Eight states have such policies.
- **Notes and citation:** What is the source of this information and what other nuances might be reflected in the policies?
- **Date enacted:** The majority of the policies were enacted during the mid to late 1990s. For dates of court rulings and attorney general opinions, please see information in the notes and citation field.

State	Policy		Opt-Out	Assist. to Low SES	Notes and Citation	Date Enacted
	Dress Code	Uniform				
Arizona		X			ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 15-342	1995
Arkansas	X	X	X		Local boards are directed to create advisory committees comprised of parents and students to determine if the district should adopt a uniform policy. If recommended, the issue is presented to the voters. ARK. CODE ANN. § 6-18-102	1995

State	Policy		Opt-Out	Assist. to Low SES	Notes and Citation	Date Enacted
	Dress Code	Uniform				
California	X	X	X	X	Uniforms are to be selected by the principal, staff and parents of each individual school. CAL. EDUC. CODE § 35183	1993
Colorado	X	X			Students are prohibited from wearing apparel that is "deemed disruptive to the classroom or to the maintenance of a safe and orderly school." COLO. REV. STAT. § 22-32-109.1	2000
Connecticut		X			CONN. GEN. STAT. § 10-221f	1996
Delaware	X	X		X	School boards must ensure that the uniforms are available at a reasonable price. DEL. CODE ANN. TIT. 14, § 4120	1995
Florida	X	X			Students may wear hats, sunglasses, and other sun-protective wear while outdoors. FLA. STAT. CH. 1001.43	1998
Illinois	X	X	X	X	Parents seeking to opt-out their children must do so to the school board based on religious objections. ILL. COMP. STAT. § 5/10-22.25b	1990
Indiana	X				IND. CODE § 20-33-8-12	1995
Iowa	X				Districts may adopt a dress code policy if they believe that it is necessary for the "health, safety or positive educational environment." IOWA CODE § 279.58	1995
Kentucky	X				The 6th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in *Blau v. Fort Thomas* that KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 160.345 "tasks the Council with setting school policy that 'provides an environment to enhance the students' achievement and helps the school meet [its] goals.' A dress code [adopted by a local middle school] assuredly falls well within this broad authority." *Blau v. Fort Thomas Pub. Sch. Dist.*, 401 F.3d 381 (2005)	--

State	Policy		Opt-Out	Assist. to Low SES	Notes and Citation	Date Enacted
	Dress Code	Uniform				
Louisiana	X	X			Every school is authorized to select their own uniforms and must display them prior to the beginning of each year. LA. REV. STAT. ANN. § 17:416.7	1992
Massachusetts					School officials are *prohibited* from establishing a dress code abridging the rights of students as to personal dress and appearance unless it violates "reasonable standards of health, safety and cleanliness." MASS. GEN. LAWS CH. 71 § 83	1995
Minnesota		X		X	When adopting a school uniform policy, the district board must promote student, staff, parent and community involvement in the program. MINN. STAT. § 123B.36	1995
Mississippi		X	X		Attorney General Opinion #99-0274 (1999) states that, "pursuant to § 37-7-301, it is within the discretion of a school board to establish a policy mandating uniforms so long as a hardship waiver policy is also in place wherein those children who are unable to purchase the uniform will be provided same by the school district… If the mandatory school uniform rule furthers a substantial, legitimate interest of the school district."	--
Missouri	X	X			Districts that are in a city not within a county may establish dress code and school uniform policies. MO. REV. STAT. § 167.029	1996
Nevada		X			Districts may also require a dress code for teachers and other staff employed by the district. NEV. REV. STAT. § 392.458	1997
New Hampshire	X				Under N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 189:15, which allows school boards to adopt measures for discipline of schools, the district court in *Bannister v. Paradis* stated that "school boards do have power to adopt reasonable restrictions	--

State	Policy		Opt-Out	Assist. to Low SES	Notes and Citation	Date Enacted
	Dress Code	Uniform				
					on dress as part of its educational policy and as an educational device," but, "the school board's power must be limited to that required by its function of administering public education." *Bannister v. Paradis*, 316 F. Supp. 185 (1970)	
New Jersey	X	X	X	X	Specific uniforms are selected by the principal, staff and parents of each school. N.J. STAT. ANN. §§ 18A:11-8, 9	1996
New York	X				N.Y. EDUC. LAW § 2801	2000
North Carolina		X			A district court ruled in *Hicks v. Halifax County Bd. of Educ.*, 93 F. Supp. 2d 649, that N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-16, which provides that "The State Board of Education may authorize up to five local school administrative units to implement pilot programs in which students are required to wear uniforms in public schools… did not limit the authority of the County School Board to adopt a uniform policy for its students, which was implemented pursuant to its 'general control and supervision' authority under [§ 115C-36]." *Hicks v. Halifax County Bd. of Educ.*, 93 F. Supp. 2d 649 (1999)	--
Ohio	X	X		X	Before the adoption of a uniform, the district must offer ample time for principal, staff and parent comments and suggestions. OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3313.665	1995
Oklahoma	X	X			OKLA. STAT. ANN. TIT. 70, § 24-100.4	Unknown
Pennsylvania	X	X			24 PA. CONS. STAT. § 13-1317.3	1998
Tennessee		X			The state board must establish guidelines and criteria for local adoption of a uniform including that the clothing must be "simple, appropriate, readily available and inexpensive." TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-1-302	1996

State	Policy		Opt-Out	Assist. to Low SES	Notes and Citation	Date Enacted
	Dress Code	Uniform				
Texas		X	X	X	District boards in independent school districts may adopt school uniform policies. TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. §§ 11.158, 11.162	1995
Utah		X	X	X	Apart from an opt-out policy, districts must allow for principals to exempt students due to extenuating circumstances. UTAH CODE ANN. § 53A-15-1102	2006
Virginia		X			No state funds may be used for the purchase of school uniforms. VA. CODE ANN. § 22.1-79.2	1995

Michael Colasanti is a researcher with the ECS Information Clearinghouse.

Equipping Education Leaders, Advancing Ideas

StateNotes

Finance – Special Education

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 810 • Denver, CO 80203-3442 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

State Funding Programs for High-Cost Special Education Students

By Michael Griffith

May 2008

In this country approximately six-million public school students receive special education services. Of these six-million students, approximately 5%, or 300,000, could be defined as "high need" or "high cost" students. School district expenditures for a high-cost student can exceed thirteen times that of a general education student. In addition, high-cost special education students are not evenly distributed through states — placing disproportionate spending pressures on certain districts.[1]

In 2004, the federal government began allowing states to use some Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) payments to help provide additional funding to districts with high-cost special education students.[2] A study conducted by Project Forum at the National Association of State Directors of Special Education in 2006 found that at least 30 states already had high-cost special education programs in place prior to 2004, and other states were looking at taking advantage of the new change in federal law in the near future.[3] The Education Commission of the States (ECS) recently reviewed 12 states' high-cost special education policies to determine how each state defines special education students as being "high-cost" and what, if any, additional funding is provided to districts to address their funding needs.

How Do High-Cost Special Education Funding Programs Function?

States provide high-cost special education funding on top of traditional special education subsidies, which are above and beyond general education funding allotments. For example, a state may provide $5,000 for a general education student, plus 40% extra for a student with a disability, plus 75% of a student's special education costs above $30,000. Under this type of system, a school district with a special education student requiring $50,000 in expenses would receive the following state funding:

1. General education	$ 5,000
2. Special education (40% * $5,000)	$ 2,000
3. High-cost special education ($20,000 beyond the $30,000 threshold = $20,000 * 75%)	$15,000
Total State Funding	$22,000

The state would provide for $22,000 of the cost of this student and the school district would be responsible for the remaining $28,000. This same student in a state without a high-cost special education program would generate $7,000 in state funding — leaving the school district to fund the remaining $43,000.

How Policy Researchers Define High-Cost

A study published in 2004 by the Special Education Expenditure Project (SEEP) defined high-cost special education students as those who are the 5% highest cost special education students to educate. The SEEP study found that during the 1999-2000 school-year, the average expenditures for the 5% highest cost special education students were between $35,924 and $57,129 depending on where the student received their education.[4] When these numbers are adjusted for inflation (in 2008 dollars) the cost of students in the top 5% ranges from $44,035 to $70,028, or 5.5 to 8.7 times greater than the average spending for general education students. The SEEP study also reviewed information about students in the highest 1% of per-student expenditures and found that these students on average cost districts between 8.8 and 13.6 times more to educate than general education students.

Information From The Special Education Expenditure Project

	Average Expenditure Per Student 1999-2000			Average Expenditure Per Student In 2008 Dollars[5]		
Educated in:	General Education	Special Ed. 5% Highest Cost	Special Ed. 1% Highest Cost	General Education	Special Ed. 5% Highest Cost	Special Ed. 1% Highest Cost
Elementary Schools	$6,556	$39,909	$57,411	$8,036	$48,920	$70,373
Secondary Schools	$6,556	$35,924	$61,381	$8,036	$44,035	$75,240
Special Schools	NA	$57,129	$88,966	NA	$70,028	$109,053

How States Define "High-Cost"

ECS reviewed legislation, rules and regulations in 12 states that provide districts with additional funding for high-cost students with disabilities. Nine of the 12 states in this review (Arkansas, Kansas, Montana, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Texas, Vermont and Wisconsin) defined a student as being high-cost once a district's expenditures for that student surpass an exact dollar amount. It is important to remember that the lower the threshold amount is set, the quicker state funding kicks in. In Montana, the amount changes each year, but in the other eight states, the dollar amount is fixed in state legislation or rules. Seven states use a single dollar amount which ranged from $10,000 (New York) to $50,000 (Vermont) with the average being approximately $26,500.New Jersey is the only state that uses multiple amounts which ranged from $40,000 (when educated with non-disabled peers) to $55,000 (when educated with disabled peers in a private institution).

Three states defined students as being high-cost by comparing their cost to either the average cost of educating all students or the cost of educating general education students. Illinois defined a student as high-cost once his or her expenditures exceed a per-capita tuition rate (which varies for each district). North Carolina defined it as three times the state's average cost of educating a general education student ($22,788.45 for 2007/2008). For North Dakota, it is 4.5 times the state's average cost of educating all students ($33,776/elementary students and $35,010/secondary student for 2007/2008).

How is Additional Funding Provided by the States

ECS's review of 12 states with high-cost special education systems found three basic ways in which states provide additional funding to districts with high-need students.

1. *The state pays for a percentage of the additional costs with a spending cap.*

Three states (Arkansas, Montana and New York) provide districts with a percentage of per-student costs beyond the definition of high-costs but cap their contribution. In Arkansas, the state pays for 100% of the first $15,000 in special education costs, 80% of the cost beyond $15,000 up to $50,000 and 50% of the costs over $50,000 up to $100,000. Under this program, the state would pay a maximum of $68,000 to educate a special education student. Montana reimburses districts for 40% of their expenses once their per-student expenditures pass the state's definition of high-cost — a definition which changes each year. These state reimbursements are capped at 25% of total special education spending. In New York, the state pays for 49% of the costs above $10,000 but caps their contribution between $2,000 and $9,250, depending on the districts wealth.

2. *The state pays for a percentage of the additional costs without a spending cap.*

Four of the 12 states surveyed (Kansas, New Jersey, Vermont and Wisconsin) provide districts with a percentage of the cost above the state's high-cost threshold without capping their contributions. Kansas provides districts with 75% of the per-student costs above $25,000, while Vermont supplies 90% of the cost beyond the first $50,000 in expenditures per-student, and Wisconsin provides 90% of costs beyond $30,000. New Jersey has a two-tiered system that provides 90% of the cost above the threshold amount of $40,000 for students educated with their non-disabled peers. However, if a student is educated with only other disabled students, the district would receive 75% of the cost above the threshold amount of $40,000 for a student educated in district and $55,000 for a student educated in a private school.

3. Districts can request additional funding from the state.

In four of the states surveyed (Illinois, North Carolina, Oregon and Texas), districts can request additional funding from the state for each special education student whose individual expenditures exceed the state's definition of "high-cost". In each of these states, funding is distributed to districts on a prorated basis depending on the total number of requests received.

Conclusion

While education researchers and state policymakers have generally recognized that funding high-cost special education students needs to be addressed, there is little consensus about both how to define which students are high-cost and how best to fund those students. Further research on both of these issues is required to help guide future policy development.

	A Student With Disabilities is Defined as "High-Cost" If His/Her Total Expenditures Exceed:	What Additional Funding Is Provided
Arkansas	$15,000.	Up to $53,000 in additional funding based on the state formula.
Illinois	4 times a district's per-capita tuition rate.	A district may request additional funding from the state if spending exceeds the threshold amount.
Kansas	$25,000	The state provides 75% of the cost above the threshold amount.
Montana	A state-set spending requirement (See state profile)	The state provides **up to** 40% of the cost above the threshold amount.
New Jersey	$40,000 or $55,000 (See state profile)	The state provides 75% or 90% of the cost above the threshold amount. (See state profile)
New York	$10,000	The state provides **up to** 49% of the cost above the threshold amount.
North Carolina	3 times the cost of educating a general education student.	A district may request additional funding from the state if spending exceeds the threshold amount.
North Dakota	4.5 times the state's average cost of educating a student.	The state provides 100% of the cost above the threshold amount.
Oregon	$30,000	A district may request additional funding from the state if spending exceeds the threshold amount.
Texas	$25,000	A district may request additional funding from the state if spending exceeds the threshold amount.
Vermont	$50,000	The state provides 90% of the cost above the threshold amount.
Wisconsin	$30,000	The state provides 90% of the cost above the threshold amount.

Individual State Profiles

Arkansas

Special Education Catastrophic Occurrence Fund
Administrative code: 5-18-1

How Additional Funding Is Provided:
The state pays for 100% of the first $15,000 in special education costs, 80% of the cost beyond $15,000 up to $50,000 and 50% of the costs over $50,000 up to $100,000. Under this program, the state would pay a maximum of $53,000 in additional spending for an individual high-cost special education student.

Illinois

Special Education Extraordinary Fund
State law: § 14-7.02b

How Additional Funding Is Provided:
Districts can receive additional funding if their total expenditures per special education student is greater than four times the district's per capita tuition rate (this amount varies from district to district). Excess cost reimbursements are distributed from the state's unused federal IDEA Room and Board funds. If excess cost claims exceed the unused amount, reimbursements will be prorated.

Kansas

Special Education Catastrophic State Aid
State law: § 72-983

How Additional Funding Is Provided:
The state will reimburse a district for 75% of the per-student costs beyond $25,000.

Montana

Reimbursement for Disproportionate Costs
Administrative Rule: 10.16.3812

How Additional Funding Is Provided:
In the event that a district's prior year special education expenditures exceed that district's required spending by a threshold percentage (new percentage each year), the district will be eligible for reimbursement of 40% of these disproportionate costs. Reimbursements for disproportionate costs are capped at 25% of total special education spending.

New Jersey

Extraordinary Special Education Aid
State law: § 18A:7F-55

How Additional Funding Is Provided:
For students educated with non-disabled peers, the state provides 90% of the cost above the threshold amount of $40,000.

For students educated with disabled peers, the state will provide 75% of the cost above the threshold amount of $40,000 for a student educated in district and $55,000 for a student educated in a private school.

New York
Excess Cost Aid
State law: §3602.5

How Additional Funding Is Provided:
The state pays for 49% of the excess cost above the threshold amount of $10,000 for each student. The state has set a cap of $2,000 to $9,250 in additional funding per-student depending on the district's relative wealth.

North Carolina
Children with Disabilities – Risk Pool
State Program report code: 114

How Additional Funding Is Provided:
Districts can request additional funding from the state's risk pool after expending an amount greater than three times the cost of educating a general education student ($22,788.45 for 2007/2008). If excess costs claims exceed the amount of funding in the risk pool, districts will be reimbursed based on the following priorities:

1. A district's relative wealth measured by the state's poverty index
2. School districts or charter schools with over 12.5% of their students identified as needing special education services
3. School districts or charter schools who have an excessive number of students with special education and related service costs exceeding $22,788.45
4. School districts or charter schools that do not receive local funding.

North Dakota
Special Education Excess Cost Reimbursements
State law: § 15.1-32-18

How Additional Funding Is Provided:
Districts qualify for excess cost reimbursements after expending an amount over 4.5 times the state average cost of education per-student or if they expend 2% or more of their total education budget on a single special education student. Four and a half times the state's average cost of educating a student equaled $33,776 for elementary students and $35,010 for secondary student during the 2007-08 school year. All excess costs beyond the above thresholds are the responsibility of the state.

Oregon
High Cost Disabilities Account
State law: §327.348

How Additional Funding Is Provided:
Districts can request additional state funding after expending $30,000 on a special education student.

Texas
High-cost Fund
Federal law: 34 CFR §300.114

How Additional Funding Is Provided:
Districts can request additional funding from the state's "High Cost Fund" after expending $25,000 on a special education student.

Vermont
Extraordinary Services Reimbursement
State law: 16 V.S.A. § 2962

How Additional Funding Is Provided:
The state will reimburse a district for 90% of the cost per student beyond $50,000.

Wisconsin
High-cost Special Education Aid
State law: §115.881

How Additional Funding Is Provided:
The state will reimburse a district for 90% of the cost per student beyond $30,000.

End Notes:

[1] U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, *A New Era: Revitalizing Special Education for Children and Their Families*, Washington, DC, 2002, accessed March 2008: http://www.ed.gov/inits/commissionsboards/whspecialeducation/reports/three.html#children

[2] Federal legislation: 20 U.S.C. 1412 §611(e)(3)(A)(i)

[3] Eve Muller. *Risk Pools: State Approaches*, Project Forum at the National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Alexandria, Virginia. April 2006, accessed January 2008 at: http://www.projectforum.org/docs/RiskPools-StateApproaches.pdf

[4] Jay Chambers, Yael Kidron and Angeline Spain. *Characteristics of High-Expenditure Students with Disabilities, 1999-2000*, Special Education Expenditure Project – Center for Special Education Finance, May 2004, accessed March 2008 at: http://www.csef-air.org/publications/seep/national/Rpt8.pdf

[5] The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index was used for inflation adjustments.

Michael Griffith is the senior school finance analyst with the ECS Clearinghouse. He can be reached at mgriffith@ecs.org.

StateNotes

Citizenship Education

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

State Policies on Youth Engagement in Policymaking

Ann Rautio

Updated June 2008

Most state and local school systems include language in their mission or vision statements about cultivating active, involved community members and future leaders. Civics or government courses can certainly provide opportunities for students to learn – and in some cases observe directly – how politics and government work. Yet the widely held belief that a quality education should include real-world experiences rarely leads school systems to involve students in governance and policymaking. Students are rarely involved in decisions about school or district programming, state or district graduation requirements, faculty hiring, teacher licensing or even the lunch menu – decisions that clearly affect them.

Many policymakers might argue that educational governance should be left to adults. But if the mission statements of many state and district boards of education are any indication, education is as much about fostering citizenship as it is about preparing students for college and the workplace. The skills of citizenship – including leadership and informed decisionmaking – must be learned. Involving students in governance is one way to provide opportunities for students to acquire and practice these skills.

The Education Commission of the States recently updated a 50-state review of state policies that encourage student involvement in decisionmaking and policymaking. While many institutions of higher education, districts and schools have similar policies, this review was limited to identifying those opportunities codified at the state level in state statute and administrative code.

Selected State Policies Involving Students in Policymaking

Fifteen states include students as members of their state boards of education; ten of those are nonvoting positions; in two instances, the student member has limited voting privileges, and in three states students are voting members of the board. Vermont's board has two student members, one junior and one senior. The senior is a voting member, while the junior is nonvoting.

A new trend has been the creation of youth legislative advisory councils or committees. These are committees, formed to advise the legislature on issues of importance to youth in the state. **Nine** states (**Colorado, Indiana, Louisiana, Maine**, **Maryland**, **Nevada**, **New Hampshire**, **New Mexico** and **Washington**) have formed these legislative councils. In some states, such as Maine, the youth council is able to introduce legislation.

Nine states have adopted policies requiring student input in the development of a school's "safe school" plan or similar effort aimed to ensure the safety of students within the school building.

Students are traditionally engaged in policymaking and decisionmaking with greater frequency and regularity within institutions of higher education than in the K-12 education system. The state policy review identified numerous areas of state policy requiring student voice in areas such as tuition and fee committees, parking and student judicial systems. **Thirty-five** states include student members on governing bodies such as state higher education boards of trustees or boards of governors.

The chart below outlines the specific states with policies in the four areas mentioned above: student representation on state boards of education, legislative youth advisory councils or committees, student members on state higher education governing bodies, and students represented in efforts to maintain "safe schools."

State	State Board of Education	Legislative Youth Advisory Councils	State Higher Education Governing Bodies	Safe School and Similar Efforts
Alabama				
Alaska	Nonvoting		X	X
Arizona			X	
Arkansas				
California	Voting		X	X
Colorado		X	X	X
Connecticut	Nonvoting		X	
Delaware				X
District of Columbia	Limited		X	
Florida			X	
Georgia				
Hawaii	Nonvoting		X	
Idaho				
Illinois			X	
Indiana		X	X	
Iowa	Nonvoting		X	
Kansas				
Kentucky			X	
Louisiana		X	X	
Maine	Nonvoting	X	X	
Maryland	Limited	X	X	
Massachusetts			X	X
Michigan				
Minnesota			X	
Mississippi				
Missouri			X	
Montana	Nonvoting		X	
Nebraska			X[1]	
Nevada		X		
New Hampshire		X	X	
New Jersey	Nonvoting		X	
New Mexico		X		
New York			X	
North Carolina	Nonvoting		X	
North Dakota			X	
Ohio			X	
Oklahoma				
Oregon			X	
Pennsylvania	Nonvoting		X	
Rhode Island			X	X
South Carolina			X	X
South Dakota			X	
Tennessee	Voting		X	X
Texas			X	
Utah			X	

[1] Nebraska state statute specifies eight members comprise the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska (Neb. Rev. Stat.85-103). The Board of Regents, in its by-laws, includes four students as nonvoting members of the board (Board of Regents By-laws 1.2.1).

State	State Board of Education	Legislative Youth Advisory Councils	State Higher Education Governing Bodies	Safe School and Similar Efforts
Vermont	1 Voting, 1 Nonvoting		X	
Virginia				
Washington	Nonvoting	X	X	X
West Virginia				
Wisconsin			X	
Wyoming			X	

In the course of our review of state policies, we also found states with unique approaches to policies that encourage student participation in policymaking and decisionmaking:

- In **North Carolina,** state law encourages all middle and high schools to have elected student councils through which students have input into policies and decisions that affect them "to build civic skills and attitudes such as participation in elections, discussion and debate of issues, and collaborative decision making" (NC ST § 115C-81).
- **Connecticut** established a Youth Suicide Advisory Board housed in the Department of Children and Families, as a "coordinating source for youth suicide prevention." One high school student and one college or university student are included as members of the board (Conn. Gen. Stat. § 17a-52).
- The **Arkansas** Youth Suicide Prevention Task Force includes two students who are in grades 7 or 8, two students in grades 9-12, and four students who attend institutions of higher learning in the state as members of the task force (A.C.A. § 20-77-1604).
- The **West Virginia** Workforce Investment Council includes as a member "at least one youth from a postsecondary education institution" (W. Va. Code § 5B-2B-3).
- The **Wisconsin** Professional Standards Council for teachers includes as a member, "one person who is a student enrolled in a teacher preparatory program, located in this state, that leads to initial licensure as a teacher" (Wis. Stat. § 15.377).
- **Utah** has established a process by which students may petition the local school board to include a nonvoting student member of the local school board. "The petition shall have the signatures of at least 500 students regularly enrolled in high school in the district or at least 10% of the number of students regularly enrolled in high school in the district, whichever is less…Upon receipt of the petition, the board may appoint a nonvoting student member to serve a one-year term on the local school board as an addition to the number of regular members authorized by law" (Utah Code Ann. § 20A-14-206).

Engaging students in formal decisionmaking and policymaking is an effective strategy for students to gain knowledge and skills for active, principled citizenship. Specifically, these competencies align with the state, district and school civic mission to ensure each generation of Americans are able to sustain our democracy.

This StateNote was updated by Ann Rautio, ECS National Center for Learning and Citizenship assistant researcher. The information was originally compiled by Judy English and Hillary Whitten, ECS interns, Ann Rautio and Jennifer Piscatelli, ECS National Center for Learning and Citizenship policy analyst.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 810 • Denver, CO 80203-3442 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Number of Instructional Days/Hours in the School Year

Update by Ashley Zaleski and Michael Colasanti

June 2008

Introduction

Instructional days and hours refer to the amount of time students are expected to attend in a school year. Since the 1980s, the trend has been to increase the minimum number of instructional days (or hours) that students are in school: Fifteen states have increased the minimum number of instructional days while only nine states have reduced that minimum.

While state requirements vary on the number of instructional days and hours in the year, the majority of states set the school year at 180 days (30 states). Eleven states set the minimum number of instructional days between 160 and 179 days, and two states set the minimum above 180 days (Kansas and Ohio). Finally, eight states currently do not set a minimum number of instructional days. Instead, the school year in these states is measured in numbers of hours.

The following table provides the minimum number of instructional days/hours in a school year and the start and finish dates, prescribed by law, where available (36 states allow the local district to set the start and finish dates).

Other ECS Resources on Instructional Time

- For information on the minimum number of instructional minutes/hours in each school day, please see the ECS *StateNote* titled *Minimum Number of Minutes/Hours in a High School Day*, or follow this link.
- For information on what cannot count toward official instructional time, please see the ECS *StateNote* titled *What Cannot Count Toward Official Instructional Time?*, or follow this link.
- For information on the costs of extending the school year, please see the ECS StateNote titled *Cost Per-Day for Extended School Year*, or follow this link.

State Policies Related to the School Year

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year* (by grade, if applicable)		School Start/Finish
	In Days	In Hours	
Alabama [ALA. CODE § 16-13-231(b)(1)(c)]	180 days	N/A	District option

* The minimum number of instructional days refers to the actual number of days that pupils have contact with a teacher. Teacher in-service and professional development days are included when available.

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year* (by grade, if applicable)		School Start/Finish
	In Days	In Hours	
Alaska [ALASKA STAT. § 14.03.030]	180 days (includes up to 10 in-service days)	Grades K-3 ~ 740 hours Grades 4-12 ~ 900 hours	District option
Arizona [ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 15-341.01]	180 days[1]	N/A	District option
Arkansas [ARK. CODE ANN. § 6-10-106; 005 19 CARR § 007(10.01)]	178 days (plus minimum 10 days (60 hrs) professional development/in-service)	N/A	*Start* No earlier than 8/18 and no later than 8/26[2] *Finish* Not after Memorial Day
California [CAL. EDUC. CODE § 46200(c)]	180 days	N/A	District option
Colorado [COLO. REV. STAT. § 22-32-109(1)(n)]	160 days	Half-day K ~ 450 hours Full-day K ~ 900 hours Grades 1-5 ~ 990 hours Grades 6-12 ~ 1080 hours	District option
Connecticut [CONN. GEN. STAT. § 10-16]	180 days	Half-day K ~ 450 hours Grades K-12 ~ 900 hours	District option
Delaware [DEL. CODE ANN. tit. 14, § 1049(a)(1)]	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 440 hours Grades 1-11 ~ 1060 hours Grade 12 ~ 1032 hours	District option
District of Columbia [D.C. MUN. REGS. tit. 5, § 305]	180 days	N/A	Single district
Florida [FLA. STAT. ch. 1003.02(1)(g)]	180 days	N/A	District option

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year* (by grade, if applicable)		School Start/Finish
	In Days	In Hours	
Georgia [GA. CODE ANN. § 20-2-168(c); GA. COMP. R. & REGS. r. 160-5-1-.01]	180 days	N/A	District option
Hawaii[3]	180 days	N/A	Single district
Idaho [IDAHO CODE § 33-512(1)]	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Grades 1-3 ~ 810 hours Grades 4-8 ~ 900 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 990 hours[4] (includes 22 hours for staff development)	District option
Illinois [105 ILL. COMP. STAT. 5/10-19]	176 days	N/A	District option
Indiana [IND. CODE § 20-30-2-3]	180 days	N/A	District option
Iowa [IOWA CODE § 279.10]	180 days	N/A	*Start* No earlier than 9/1 and no later than first Monday in Dec.
Kansas [KAN. STAT. ANN. § 72-1106(a),(b)]	Grades K-11 ~ 186 days Grade 12 ~ 181 days	Kindergarten ~ 465 hours Grades 1-11 ~ 1116 hours Grade 12 ~ 1086 hours	District option
Kentucky [KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 158.070]	175 days (includes up to four days for professional development)	N/A	District option
Louisiana [LA. REV. STAT. ANN. § 17:154.1; LA. ADMIN. CODE tit. 28, § CXV:333]	177 days (plus two days for staff development)	N/A	District option

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year* (by grade, if applicable)		School Start/Finish
	In Days	In Hours	
Maine [ME. REV. STAT. ANN. tit. 20-A, § 4801]	175 days (plus no more than five days for in-service education)	N/A	District option[5]
Maryland [MD. CODE ANN., EDUC. § 7-103]	180 days	1080 hours	District option
Massachusetts [MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 69, § 1G; MASS. REGS. CODE tit. 603, § 27.03]	180 days	N/A	District option
Michigan [MICH. COMP. LAWS §§ 380.1284, 1284b, 388.1701(3)(a)]	N/A	1080 hours	*Start* No earlier than Labor Day
Minnesota [MINN. STAT. §§ 120A.40, 41]			*Start* No earlier than Labor Day
Mississippi [MISS. CODE ANN. §§ 37-13-61, 63]	180 days	N/A	District option
Missouri [MO. REV. STAT. § 171.031]	174 days	1044 hours	*Start* No earlier than 10 days prior to first Monday in September
Montana [MONT. CODE ANN. § 20-1-301; MONT. ADMIN. R. 10.65.101]	N/A	Half-day K ~ 360 hours Grades K-3 ~ 720 hours Grades 4-12 ~ 1080 hours[6] (plus an additional three days for instructional and professional development)	District option
Nebraska [NEB. REV. STAT. §§ 79-211, 212]	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 400 hours Grades 1-8 ~ 1032 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 1080 hours	District option

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year* (by grade, if applicable)		School Start/Finish
	In Days	In Hours	
Nevada [NEV. REV. STAT. 388.090]	180 days	N/A	District option
New Hampshire [N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 189:1; N.H. CODE ADMIN. R. ANN. EDUC. 306.18(b)(1),(2)]	180 days	Grades 1-8 ~ 945 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 990 hours	District option
New Jersey [N.J. STAT. ANN. § 18A:7F-9]	180 days	N/A	District option
New Mexico [N.M. STAT. ANN. §§ 22-8-9(A)(1), 22-2-8.1]	180 days	Half-day K ~ 450 hours Grades K-6 ~ 990 hours[7] Grades 7-12 ~ 1080 hours	District option
New York [N.Y. EDUC. LAW § 3604(7)]	180 days	N/A	District option
North Carolina [N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-84.2(a)(1),(d)]	180 days	1000 hours	*Start* No earlier than 8/25 *Finish* Not after June 10
North Dakota [N.D. CENT CODE § 15.1-06-04]	173 days (plus two days for professional development and two for parent-teacher conferences)	N/A	District option
Ohio [OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3313.48]	182 days (including up to two days professional development)	N/A	District option
Oklahoma [OKLA. STAT. tit. 70, § 1-109]	175 days (plus up to 5 days used for professional meetings)	N/A	District option

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year* (by grade, if applicable)		School Start/Finish
	In Days	In Hours	
Oregon [OR. ADMIN. R. 581-022-1620]	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 405 hours Grades 1-3 ~ 810 hours Grades 4-8 ~ 900 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 990 hours[8]	District option
Pennsylvania [22 PA. CODE § 11.1]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Grades 1-8 ~ 900 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 990 hours	District option
Rhode Island [R.I. GEN. LAWS § 16-2-2]	180 days	N/A	District option
South Carolina [S.C. CODE ANN. § 59-1-425]	180 days (plus three days for mandatory professional development)	N/A	*Start* No earlier than third Monday in August
South Dakota [S.D. CODIFIED LAWS §§ 13-26-1,9]	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 437.5 hours[9] Grades 4-12 ~ 962.5 hours[10]	*Start* No earlier than the first Tuesday following the first Monday in September[11]
Tennessee [TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-6-3004]	180 days (plus five days for in-service and one day for parent-teacher conferences)	N/A	*Start* No earlier than Tuesday after Labor Day unless changed by majority vote of school board
Texas [TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. §§ 25.081, 0811]	180 days	N/A	*Start* No earlier than the fourth Monday in August
Utah [UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-419-3(A),4(C)]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Grade 1 ~ 810 hours Grades 2-12 ~ 990 hours	District option
Vermont [VT. STAT. ANN. tit. 16, § 1071]	175 days	N/A	Determined regionally

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year* (by grade, if applicable)		School Start/Finish
	In Days	In Hours	
Virgin Islands [17 V.I. CODE § 61]	N/A	1080 hours	*Start* No earlier than first Tuesday after first Monday in August *Finish* No later than second Friday in June
Virginia [VA. CODE ANN. §§ 22.1-79.1, 98]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 540 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 990 hours	*Start* After Labor Day
Washington [WASH. REV. CODE §§ 28A.150.220]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 1000 hours	District option
West Virginia [W. VA. CODE § 18-5-45(c),(e)]	180 days	N/A	*Start* No earlier than 8/26 *Finish* No later than 6/8
Wisconsin [WIS. STAT. § 121.02(f)]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 437 hours Grades 1-6 ~ 1050 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 1137 hours	District option
Wyoming [WYO. STAT. ANN. § 21-4-301]	175 days	N/A	District option

This ECS StateNote was updated by Ashley Zaleski and Michael Colasanti, ECS researchers.

Equipping Education Leaders, Advancing Ideas

[1] Or equivalent number of minutes of instruction per year
[2] School year may begin on 8/18 only if it falls on a Monday; otherwise, the school year may begin no earlier than 8/19.
[3] According to Hawaii teachers' contracts, the teacher work year is no more than 190 days, 10 of which are non-instructional-Sandra Goya, Acting Communications Director, Hawaii Department of Education.
[4] Instructional time for grade 12 may be reduced by up to 11 hours.
[5] Districts must work within regional units to coordinate with its career and technical center units to ensure that, among other requirements, there are not more than 9 dissimilar instructional days within each regional calendar.
[6] For graduating seniors, 1050 aggregate hours is sufficient.

[7] Thirty-three hours of the full-day kindergarten program may be used for home visits by the teacher or for parent-teacher conferences. Twenty-two hours of grades one through five programs may be used for home visits by the teacher or for parent-teacher conferences.
[8] If approved by the local school board, instructional time for seniors may be reduced by up to 30 hours.
[9] Effective July 1, 2010
[10] School boards may release graduating seniors prior to the end of the school year.
[11] Schools may start before this date if referred to voters of the district by petition.

Policy Brief

High School – Graduation Requirements

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Dispelling the Myths About the Negative Effects of Raising High School Graduation Requirements

By Jennifer Dounay

August 2008

Introduction

In the last several years, a number of states have raised high school graduation requirements, particularly in mathematics and science, in an effort to:

- **Improve student achievement at the high school level**.
- **Address postsecondary institutions' and employers' complaints** that high school graduates are inadequately prepared for life after high school graduation.
- **Respond to research on the link between high school curriculum and baccalaureate attainment**. The Answers in the Tool Box and The Toolbox Revisited studies by Cliff Adelman suggest that the high school curriculum is the best pre-collegiate indicator of a student's likelihood of completing a four-year degree within six to eight years of high school graduation.[1],[2]
- **Respond to recent surveys of high school graduates and dropouts**. High school graduates and high school dropouts report they were not challenged in high school, and would have worked harder had more been expected of them.
- **More closely align high school exit requirements and college entry requirements**. Findings of the Bridge Project at Stanford University indicate that many students — especially traditionally underserved students — and their parents are unaware of college entrance course requirements.

The negative impacts of raising high school graduation requirements are often raised by well-intentioned individuals as counter arguments to discussions in favor of raising students' course requirements; however these counter arguments are often based on misperceptions, or "myths." While the purpose of this policy brief is not to stifle public debate, it should be noted that when arguments are not backed by research and state and local experience, no one is well served —not students, their families, postsecondary institutions or employers. Taxpayers who help cover the costs of postsecondary remediation also are not well served, nor communities, states and regions who are unable to drive economic development due to an inadequate supply of well-trained high school and college graduates.

This policy brief presents the potential consequences commonly raised by critics of increased high school graduation requirements:

- #1: If we raise requirements, more students will drop out
- #2: We don't have teachers to teach these courses
- #3: Additional course requirements are an unfunded mandate
- #4: Increasing course requirements will push out the arts, foreign language, and other "non-core" disciplines
- #5 Career/technical education will be sidelined
- #6: Not everybody needs to go to college
- #7: Most students don't need to take four years of math — or advanced math — or lab science

Each "myth" is followed by relevant research and/or experience, as well as guiding principles for best policy in establishing more challenging curricular expectations for all students.

Myth #1: If we raise requirements, more students will drop out

Critics of raising high school graduation requirements fear that significantly increasing the number of courses or difficulty level of courses all students must complete for high school graduation will drive students to drop out of school.

Caveats

Admittedly, up till now, no state has graduated a class for which the default high school curriculum was aligned with college admissions expectations–Texas will be the first state to do so, effective with the Class of 2008. Therefore, the extent of the impact on graduation rates will only become clear a few years from now — once a few cohorts have completed the more challenging requirements — and that's only if Texas does not change its methodology of calculating graduation rates between now and then.

Recent experience

At the district level, experience to date does not bear out the claim that an increase in graduation requirements results in an increase in dropout rates. Based on parental and community support, the school board of **San Jose**, **California** — a large ethnically and economically diverse district — moved in the 1990s to make the "A-G" curriculum the district's default high school curriculum, beginning with the graduating Class of 2002. The so-called "A-G curriculum," aligned with the course admissions requirements to the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) systems, includes:

- Four years of college preparatory English composition and literature
- Three years of mathematics (four years recommended), including Algebra I, geometry and Algebra II
- Two years of lab science (three years recommended by the UC system), including one biological science and one physical science
- Two years of history and social science, including one year of U.S. history (or one semester each of U.S. history and civics or American government) and one year of social science (must be one year of world history for the UC system)
- Two years of the same foreign language (three years recommended by the UC system)
- One year of visual/performing arts
- One "college preparatory elective" (additional year of any subject from the above list).[3]

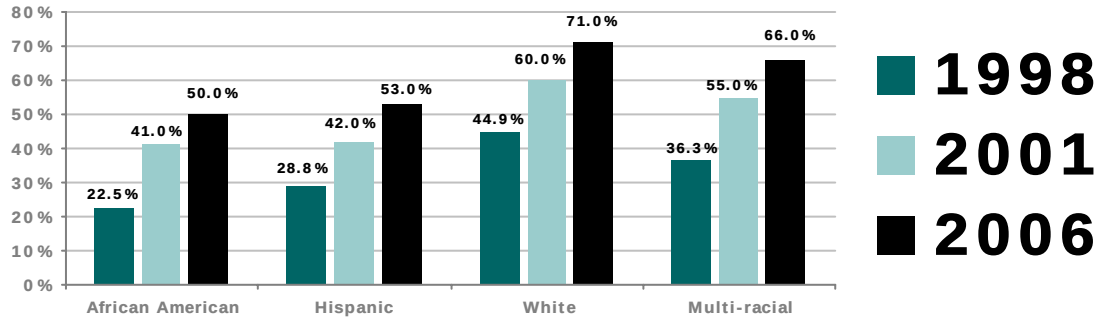
The district saw positive results once completion of the A-G curriculum became expected of all students, including:

- The high school graduation rate rose slightly, rather than fall, as critics had feared.
- The number of students taking Advanced Placement (AP) exams rose, as did the number of students scoring at least a "3" (the minimum score required by many colleges for students to be awarded AP credit).
- Scores on state reading and mathematics assessments rose at rates higher than the state average.
- The White/Latino achievement gap narrowed considerably, and pass rates for Latino students in A-G courses increased.
- Nearly two out of three San Jose district graduates met eligibility requirements to enroll in the CSU or UC system. Not only did they complete the requisite high school courses with a "C" or better, but they met the minimum grade point average threshold. Prior to the reform, about 40% of district students completed the A-G curriculum, and very few were traditionally underrepresented students.[4]

Based on the success of the efforts of San Jose Unified School District, the Los Angeles Unified School District has decided to make the A-G curriculum the default high school curriculum, effective with the Class of 2012. Furthermore, the Education Consortium of San Diego County held a forum in March 2008 to evaluate what districts in the county would need to do to successfully implement an "A-G for All" policy.[5]

At the state level, **Indiana** introduced the rigorous Core 40 diploma option in the 1993-1994 school year. Effective with the high school freshmen of the 2007-2008 school year (Class of 2011), all students will be required to complete the Core 40 curriculum and related end-of-course assessments. Though time will tell what the actual impact of the increased statewide graduation requirements will be, the results from the

first decade-plus of the curriculum's existence are encouraging. The number of students voluntarily selecting the Core 40 or academic honors diploma option has grown substantially – with the largest increases in Core 40 completers among African American and multiracial students, and significant gains among Hispanic students (see graph below). In the Class of 2006, 67% of Indiana graduates completed the Academic Honors or Core 40 diploma. The state has risen from 34th (in 1992) to 10th (in 2002) nationally in the number of high school graduates enrolled in college the following fall. Sixty-four percent of Core 40 graduates who are first-time full-time students earn four-year degree at a selective Indiana university within six years, as opposed to 47% of their peers who held a general high school diploma.



Source: PowerPoint, "Advancing College Preparation in Indiana," Indiana Commission for Higher Education, September 2007

Avoiding the pitfalls with essential policy components

Based on the research — and the positive results in San Jose Unified School District and Indiana — it appears likely that states that hold all students to a college/work-ready high school curriculum will see improved student outcomes, provided that supportive structures are in place. Such supportive structures would make sure that:

- **Middle grades curricula are adequately rigorous** to ensure students are ready for more advanced coursework when they enter high school. "Backmapping" of standards, curricula and assessments from grade 12 back to grade 6, and vertical team efforts between middle and high school content-area teachers can support this middle/high school alignment.
- **Teacher preparation and professional development programs** are at a level to ensure teacher capacity to teach to the higher expectations.
- State policy ensures the **early identification of high school students** (and middle grade students) falling behind, and requires students to participate in targeted remediation provided in a timely fashion.
- **Remediation offerings are evaluated** to ensure quality and consistency across schools and districts.
- **State policy provides alternatives**–such as proficiency-based credit opportunities–for students struggling to demonstrate competency in a traditional classroom setting.

States should also consider implementing measures to ensure that the content of "rigorous" courses meets commonly-held expectations. The 2006 ECS policy brief, "Ensuring Rigor in the High School Curriculum: What States Are Doing," provides further detail on several such state approaches.

Myth #2: We don't have teachers to teach these courses

Critics of increasing high school graduation requirements, particularly mathematics and science requirements, often put forward the argument that the state cannot provide an adequate supply of teachers in these subject areas to staff the additional classrooms needed.

Recent experience

The reality tends to fall into two categories: (1) Graduation requirements have had a limited impact on teacher recruitment/professional development demands — either because of a limited difference between the "old" and "new" requirements or because the state is already preparing an adequate supply of teachers; or (2) States are using creative means to ensure supply.

Changes don't always equate with "more"

In some states, the difference between the "old" and "new" graduation requirements is minimal, resulting in nominal staffing changes. The table below illustrates the course requirement changes in **Oklahoma**, which will make a "college preparatory/work ready curriculum" the default curriculum effective with the Class of 2010. Because the new policy requires that certain Carnegie units align with college admissions requirements, teachers need to be prepared to teach potentially higher-level knowledge and skills, but more of them are not necessarily needed.

Subject	Graduation requirements pre-Class of 2010	Graduation requirements effective Class of 2010
English	4 units, incl. 1 unit grammar and composition	4 units, incl. grammar, composition, literature or any course approved for college admission reqts.
Math	3 units, incl. Algebra I	3 units, limited to Algebra I or any course with content/rigor above Algebra I and approved for college admission reqts.
Science	3 units, incl. Biology I	3 units lab science, limited to biology, chemistry, physics or any lab science with content/rigor equal to or above biology and approved for college admission reqts.
Social Studies	3 units, incl. 1 unit U.S. history, .5 or 1 unit U.S. govt., .5 unit OK history	3 units, incl. 1 unit U.S. history, .5 unit U.S. government, .5 unit OK history, and 1 unit approved for college admission reqts.
Arts	2 units	1 unit fine arts or speech
Other	0	2 units foreign language or 2 units computer technology approved for college admission reqts.
Electives	8	1 unit chosen from English, math, lab science, social studies, foreign language, computer technology or career and technology education approved for college admission reqts., plus 6 units general electives
TOTAL	23 units	23 units

6

Professional development can potentially trump recruitment

2006 **Michigan** legislation replaced the almost-entirely locally established graduation requirements with a rigorous default high school curriculum, the Michigan Merit Curriculum. Because Michigan's postsecondary institutions prepare an adequate supply of teachers for the state, the focus has been on aligning teacher preparation and professional development with the new statewide content expectations.

To better prepare pre-service educators to teach challenging content, the state department of education has crosswalked the new graduation requirements with teacher preparation requirements. As content expectations have evolved, these have been shared immediately with teacher preparation institutions, so that courses and certification exams can be adjusted accordingly. The department actually involved representatives from colleges and universities, including teacher preparation programs, in the development of high school content expectations. This inclusive approach not only assisted in alignment, but helped develop buy-in from teacher preparation programs.

State, ISD and LEA professional development is addressing the need to equip teachers with deeper and differentiated instruction skills in teaching a broader population of Algebra II students, who demand real-world applications and need teachers to explain complex concepts in multiple ways. The Office of School Improvement and Office of Professional Preparation Services are coordinating teacher professional development throughout the state to meet these and other demands raised by the new graduation requirements.[7]

Increases in core requirements are often offset by reductions in electives

Many states are raising graduation requirements, but are not making drastic changes to the total number of courses students must complete. Instead, they are reducing the number of electives and increasing the number of required Carnegie units (i.e., increasing two units math to three, or three units science to four).

Getting creative

Staffing is often difficult in rural states — particularly for advanced coursework. **South Dakota**'s new default high school curriculum (effective with the Class of 2010) includes an Algebra I, geometry, Algebra II sequence, and three units of lab science including biology and chemistry or physics. Graduates in 2010 and beyond will have the option of completing a "distinguished" curriculum that requires a fourth unit each in math and science.

To meet the demand these increases pose, South Dakota is following a multitiered approach:

- **Using technology**. South Dakota is building capacity through a statewide online learning pilot program to begin in fall 2008. Funded by a $2 million National Math and Science Initiative grant, supported by ExxonMobil, the program will provide seven online Advanced Placement (AP) courses in English, science and math through the South Dakota Virtual School. Teachers selected to teach the courses will be chosen based on their success in integrating technology into instruction. And as an added bonus for student motivation to take challenging AP courses and do well on coursework and exams, students earning a "3" or higher on an exam will earn $100, as will the student's teacher.[8]
- **Starting prior to high school**. Students need to enter high school with the mathematics knowledge and skills they need to succeed in rigorous courses in math (and by extension, science). Through the South Dakota Counts program, the state is developing the capacity of K-5 teachers through a "train the trainer" approach. South Dakota Counts provides training for a Mathematics Teacher Leader at each elementary school in the state, who in turn will establish a model classroom as a learning model for fellow educators in the building. Building principals likewise attend training each year of the program in providing support for high-quality mathematics instruction. Additional supports are provided through the placement of a Mathematics Specialist at each of the seven Education Service Agencies (ESAs), plus an additional specialist for the Sioux Falls district.[9][10]

Arkansas, which will require all graduates to complete its rigorous "Smart Core" curriculum effective with the Class of 2010, is also using innovative approaches to ensure adequate and well-prepared teachers at the high school level.

- **Using professionals on a part-time basis**. The "Professional Teaching Permit" is but one example of a state alternative certification program to encourage professionals in non-teaching careers to teach part-time in their area of expertise (see the ECS Teacher Recruitment and Retention State Policy Database at http://www.tqsource.org/randr/policy/index.asp). The one-year permit allows a working or retired professional with a bachelor's degree plus three or more years work experience in a field to teach one to two classes per semester in that content area in grades 9-12. Candidates must pass the appropriate content test, be subject to a background check, and complete 40 hours of training in pedagogy during the first year of teaching.[11]
- **Promoting a licensure for 8th grade Algebra I teachers.** The state department has developed an additional "Algebra I Endorsement, Grade 8" teaching endorsement. Eligible teachers must have achieved at least a minimum score on the PRAXIS II Middle School Mathematics test, have been certified in Middle Childhood Math/Science (4-8) since 2002 or Middle Childhood Mathematics (5-8) before 2002, and must have completed a 15-hour program of study (not including the six semester hours for elementary/early childhood educators) that includes "content in numeration, computation, number theory and number sense, algebraic concepts, probability, data analysis, statistics, geometry, and concepts of advanced math and calculus."[12]
- **Sharing teachers across schools/districts.** The "Arkansas Traveling Teacher Program," created in 2007 and launched in the 2007-2008 school year, authorizes teachers of grades 9-12 to teach one or more courses in a receiving district. A "host" and "receiving" school district must serve under 8,000 students and sign an approved written agreement. Up to 45 traveling teachers may be active in any school year. Priority is given to agreements in which the receiving district is requesting services in a critical shortage area, and affected courses must count toward accreditation. Travel costs are reimbursed, and the traveling teacher earns a $2,000 bonus for teaching one semester or $4,000 for teaching two semesters. Legislation authorizes the department to establish an online registry of teachers willing to provide traveling teacher services, each teacher's employing school district, and any course the teacher is qualified to teach.[13]

North Dakota likewise enacted legislation in 2007 providing that (1) if a local board has a vacant position at the end of a school year and is unable to find a highly qualified candidate 45 days before the beginning of the new school year, (2) the board has notified the state superintendent of the vacancy, (3) "has done all things necessary and proper … to find a suitable and highly qualified candidate" and (4) "will be unable to meet the statutory requirements for school approval if the position remains unfilled," the state superintendent must authorize the board to increase compensation for the vacant position to a level the

board deems necessary to attract a highly qualified candidate. Compensation for an individual hired under these circumstances may not be reduced in future years.[14]

Online learning enhances access and expertise
According to the ECS Virtual High Schools database (last updated December 2007), 28 states had developed virtual high schools to provide broad access to high-quality, rigorous high school instruction across the state. **Alabama**'s ACCESS initiative provides not only online courses, but video conferencing technology, which will be available in all 371 high schools in the state by the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year.[15] **Michigan** is likewise seeing an increase in the number of students taking online courses for high school credit, both through districts, as well as through Michigan Virtual University. The Michigan Department of Education plans to post a list of providers of inexpensive or free online courses aligned with state standards, thus facilitating district access while ensuring quality. And according to anecdotal evidence in the state, many students are taking math and credit recovery courses online, thereby reducing teacher demand.[16]

Avoiding the pitfalls with essential policy components
To ensure that teacher recruitment and preparation programs provide the people and skills a rigorous high school curriculum demands, states should consider policies that:

- Calibrate certification exam cut scores (PRAXIS II or otherwise) with graduation requirements to indicate that candidates have a solid grasp of essential knowledge and skills
- Leverage high-quality virtual courses, particularly courses in hard-to-staff subject areas.
- Provide support lines to recredentialed or alternatively certified teachers who need assistance with pedagogy, classroom management and other essential issues.
- Accommodate a certain number of exceptions to the teacher salary schedule to fill hard-to-staff positions.
- Provide incentives for teachers to cover multiple schools or for schools to share multiple positions.
- Remove bureaucratic barriers to the teaching profession by reducing timelines and streamlining processes.
- Provide access to short-term, quality online tutoring to help teachers who barely miss meeting highly-qualified status get over the content proficiency hump.

Myth #3: Additional course requirements are an unfunded mandate

Critics frequently raise the concern that schools and districts do not receive additional allocations to cover the costs associated with making more units of particular courses available. As most policymakers know, any new mandate requires either a shift in existing resources, or an increase in resources. While most districts will be able to reallocate existing resources, some districts will be required to seek supplemental funding.

Recent experience
As noted by department of education staff in multiple states, the new high school graduation requirements generally maintain the same number of Carnegie units — and simply redesign which courses must fulfill those unit requirements — or raise the required courses by a marginal amount (by .5 or 1 Carnegie unit). As noted by Michigan Department of Education staff, when the statewide graduation requirements were approved in 2006, most districts were already requiring students to complete 24 Carnegie units. State legislators acknowledged that they had been providing foundation funding amount for every student in every district, and that how each district used that funding was up to them. With the enactment of the Michigan Merit Curriculum, they were still providing the foundation funding — the state was just specifying which courses had to fulfill those 24 units.

Policymakers also should realize that in many middle- and upper-income high schools, the majority of students are likely already taking the majority of the rigorous courses that will be required of all students. In these schools, in other words, it is a question of transferring a proportionately small number of seats in lower-level math and science courses, for example, to seats in upper-level math and science courses. The real challenge lies in those buildings — often serving poor and minority students — in which fewer sections of advanced math, advanced science (or other courses in the new graduation requirements) are made available.

Cliff Adelman, addressing the inequitable "opportunity-to-learn" among "[p]oor and working-class students, students from rural areas, and minority students," proposes dual enrollment as a potential solution: "Under dual enrollment, high school students who do not have access to trigonometry or physics or third year Spanish at the high school take those courses at the local community college and receive both high school and college credit for them. Direct provision can also fill curricular gaps at those high school districts willing to accept college faculty who provide the instruction on site."[17] Alternatively, a school might choose to reallocate existing resources by transferring staff assigned small higher-level courses (that are not included in the increased graduation requirements) to courses included in the increased graduation requirements, and making the higher-level course available through a dual enrollment agreement.

And it's important to remember that it isn't all about money. It is possible to do many atypical things when there is the belief that it is the right thing to do. For example, schools can stagger teacher schedules at the high school, so that they can offer a longer day for students who need it without a huge added cost.

Portable labs and shared lab space
Creative and cost-effective approaches such as portable labs and shared lab space can increase the number of lab science courses available, particularly in rural or small high schools and districts. In addition, an increasing number of states are making available–and students are flocking to–online courses through state-administered virtual high schools. Virtual high schools can offer far more students access to advanced courses than traditional brick-and-mortar classrooms can.[18]

Myth #4: Increasing course requirements will push out the arts, foreign language, and other "non-core" disciplines

The argument is often made that additional high school course requirements will force schools to reduce or eliminate offerings in the visual and performing arts, foreign languages, and/or other subjects not included in the more challenging graduation requirements. In fact, many states' increased high school graduation requirements are either approaching or in line with the course admissions requirements to four-year institutions in their states. In many cases, students must complete two or more credits of foreign language — and in some cases, credits in the arts — to apply to public four-year institutions.

Even in states that are implementing the most rigorous expectations, increasing math, science, English and social studies requirements need not exclude other student options. For example, by 2011 Indiana students must complete 4 English, 3 math, 3 science, 3 social studies and 1.5 units of physical education/health. With a total of 20 units required, that leaves 6 other units of coursework among which students can choose. And students could choose to exceed the 20 unit requirement, leaving even greater flexibility in including foreign language or arts courses. In fact, a number of states require a greater number of credits — ranging from 21 to 24. Also of note is the fact that many of the students keenly interested in the arts and foreign language will seek admission to a four-year postsecondary institution to continue their studies in those areas. Such students are placed at a disadvantage when they do not complete the high school courses required for admission to four-year institutions.

Avoiding the pitfalls with essential policy components

Policymakers should seriously consider evaluating their college/work-ready graduation requirements, and if these do not include the arts and/or foreign languages, reduce the number of electives required and replace with a commensurate number of units in these disciplines. By doing so, policymakers are helping ensure that (1) the increased graduation requirements are truly "college-ready" and aligned with four-year postsecondary admissions requirements and (2) students are guaranteed a well-rounded curriculum, including the academic, cognitive, and other benefits that are associated with studying the arts and foreign languages. Policymakers also should consider the potential for online learning as a way to expand the school day — so that students can participate in band, chorus, etc., and additional academic courses can be taken outside the school day and school year.

Myth #5: Career/technical education will be sidelined

In debates on increasing high school graduation requirements, two questions are often raised in regards to career/technical education (CTE):

- Won't increasing course requirements diminish or push out CTE offerings?
- Should students on the CTE track be forced to take these "academic" courses?

Recent experience

Graduation requirement policies in 21 states explicitly allow CTE courses to be substituted for traditional academic courses.[19] And in **Michigan**, as in a growing number of states, a high school student will be considered to have completed a Carnegie unit if the student successfully completes the department's subject area content expectations or guidelines. Michigan Department of Education staff note that permitting credit to be completed through a student's demonstration of proficiency has opened the opportunity for CTE and academic subject area teachers to be creative in how and when students can take various credits. For example, a math instructor may partner with an auto mechanics instructor to teach more students with available resources — adding the real-world learning that surveyed students demand/want.

Recent research

Not only can integrating academics and career/technical education make the most of existing human resources, but it can positively impact student achievement. A 2006 study by the National Research Study on Career and Technical Education reported on the positive impact of the "Math in CTE model," in which CTE teachers in five occupational areas (agriculture, auto technology, business/marketing, health, and information technology) teamed with math teachers to identify math concepts embedded in CTE curricula and to create "CTE instructional activities that would enhance the teaching of mathematics that already existed (but was previously not emphasized) in the CTE curriculum." In comparison to a control group of CTE students whose teachers did not change their CTE curricula, students of teachers in the Math in CTE model performed significantly better on the Accuplacer Elementary Algebra and TerraNova assessments (and slightly better on WorkKeys Applied Mathematics Math). Students in both groups performed equally well on occupational tests of their technical knowledge and skills.[20]

A 2001 analysis of NELS 88 data also supports a balance between academic and CTE coursetaking. The study found that "the risk of dropping out is estimated to be at its lowest near the point at which a student completes three Carnegie units of CTE for every four Carnegie units of academic subjects[,]" and that this outcome was "especially salient for individuals who are otherwise at risk of dropping out due to low prior grades, or low prior test scores, or other risk factors." Students with a greater ratio of CTE to academic courses were more likely to drop out. And while "academic concentrators" earned the highest scores on 1992 assessments, "dual concentrators" — students who completed at least three Carnegie units in any of 11 CTE areas, plus the academic concentrator curriculum — posted the second-highest performance, an outcome that the author suggests is owing to the fact that academic concentrators took more advanced courses that CTE students simply didn't have time to take, due to the CTE courses in their schedules. "CTE concentrators" — students who had completed three or more Carnegie units in one of the vocational areas but not the courses in the academic concentration — ranked fourth, after the students who had completed neither the academic nor the dual concentration. Dual concentrators were the second most likely group to hold a "purely or primarily student" status in 1993, their first year after high school graduation.

The author proposes, "If a middle-range mix of CTE and academic course-taking can lower the risk of dropping out for some students, educators and policymakers might be wise to encourage such a mix, even if it brings slight reductions in standardized test scores in core academic subjects. Given the importance of a high school diploma in our society, slight reductions in test scores might be found acceptable in exchange for higher graduation rates."[21]

Avoiding the pitfalls with essential policy components

Given these findings, state policymakers should consider policy approaches that:

- Ensure that CTE courses are included as an option in completing graduation requirements
- Provide content standards in reading, writing, math (and other academic courses as applicable) that can be integrated into CTE courses
- Allow students to demonstrate mastery of content standards through CTE courses in lieu of academic courses
- Provide professional development and other supports for CTE and core academic teachers to team teach – not only in math, but in other subject areas as well.

Myth #6: Not everybody needs to go to college

In states that have proposed a "college-ready" or "college/work-ready" curriculum for all students, the argument has been raised that not all students should be expected to complete a high-level curriculum, since not everybody needs to go to college, or in more blatant terms, "These kids aren't college material."

Caveats

Some observers worry that public two- and four-year postsecondary institutions at their current levels of funding would be unable to absorb the additional students if more academically prepared young people sought to finish college, and would be forced to ration seats in postsecondary programs. And similar questions exist with regard to workforce demand for more college graduates: Would inadequate workforce demand for college graduates force some degree-holders to take low-paying jobs, or will the approaching retirement of millions of baby boomers provide job openings for these additional workers with postsecondary credentials? Again, these questions have not yet been resolved.

Recent research

Research suggests that (1) State and local policies establishing lower expectations for some students or creating barriers (unintentional or otherwise) to rigorous coursework have negative outcomes for students; (2) Students (and their parents) need clear signals on which courses students need to take and when they should complete them to be eligible to apply to four-year postsecondary institutions, and need to be aware that even so-called "open admissions" postsecondary institutions have admissions requirements in the form of placement tests; and (3) "College-ready" and "work-ready" are more similar than previously believed.

Lower expectations and barriers to rigorous coursework have negative outcomes for students

In a 2007 study, researchers examined the mathematics coursetaking patterns in two geographically distant districts. In District A, a narrower range of math course options are available, such that approximately half of 9th graders take Honors Algebra/Geometry 2, and a fourth take Integrated Algebra/Geometry 1. Perhaps not surprisingly, the most common course sequence in grades 9, 10 and 11 is Honors Algebra/Geometry 2, Honors Algebra/Trig 3, and Honors Algebra Precalculus 4 — providing students with the rigorous content they need to meet postsecondary course admissions requirements and achieve the ACT's college readiness benchmark in math.[22] In District B, a wide array of math courses at all levels are offered. Thirty-eight percent of 9th graders are enrolled in Integrated Math I, 17.5% in Integrated Math II, and 16% in Geometry. As a result, a smaller proportion of students in District B complete trigonometry, other advanced math, and calculus associated with a student's greater likelihood of attaining ACT's college readiness benchmark in math — or even complete the equivalent of the Algebra I, geometry, and Algebra II sequence often required for admissions to four-year postsecondary institutions. The researchers conclude that "different content trajectories offer very different opportunities to learn within and between school districts. … Early differential placement can channel students away from rigorous programs of study and such curriculum differentiation has several attendant consequences. … The variety of course options available to fulfill graduation requirements are bewildering for students who have no knowledge about the implications of their course choices. … This confusion is shared by parents who may not realize the full impact of curriculum differentiation and placement on future academic choices."[23]

A study of school-level tracking policies in a set of North Carolina high schools found that school policies made it relatively easy for students in higher-track courses to stay in these tracks, but made it difficult, if not impossible, for lower-track students to move up the ladder. Because minority and disadvantaged students "often begin secondary school in the low tracks and negative effects of low-track placements are cumulative (Gamoran, 1992), policies that reduce upward mobility produce additional barriers to the success of these students." Meanwhile, policies that reduce students' capacity to self-select into various tracking groups (i.e., requiring teacher recommendation or minimum GPA in an earlier course to enter an elite course) "tend to put an upper limit on the total enrollment of students in rigorous courses," though case-by-case exceptions can be found.[24]

Students (and their parents) need "signaling" on what's required for college

As identified by Stanford University's Bridge Project and others, students, their parents and their teachers all too often have limited awareness of the courses students must take in high school to be eligible to apply to four-year postsecondary institutions.[25] The course selection and tracking research

presented above makes this point all the more important, in that students who are either pushed or self-select into lower-track math, science and other courses — or who do not know that the state-set admissions requirements include two years of foreign language, for example, are unable to rectify their position by their junior or senior year of high school.

According to the Bridge Project's research, one of the "Ten myths that students believe about college" is "Community colleges don't have academic standards."[26] But in spite of their labeling as "open admissions" institutions, two-year institutions, along with their four-year brethren, have entrance expectations — in the form of placement exams. As stated by Michael Kirst, writing on recent research by David Conley, "Research on the content, reliability, and necessary preparation for placement exams is scant, and placement standards are not well publicized to prospective students or secondary school teachers. The content, cognitive demands, and psychometric quality of placement exams are a 'dark continent' in terms of the assessment research literature. Students are admitted to the postsecondary institution under a low standard, but placed in credit courses or remediation on another higher standard."[27] The gap in knowledge and research on placement exams makes it all the more important that students complete a high school curriculum challenging enough to prepare them to pass these exams. Those who do not will likely spend precious dollars on non-credit-bearing remedial courses.

A 2006 report on Chicago students' aspirations states, "Ask any high school student in Chicago today what he wants out of high school, … and the answer is almost without fail, "to graduate and go to college."[28] And in fact, federal data as well as state and local surveys of high school students confirm that some eight out of 10 young people aspire to go to college.[29, 30] Adult perceptions of student abilities should not drive which students receive clear messages about courses required for college enrollment, and which students do not. Opportunities should reflect student effort, not well-intentioned but misguided efforts to discourage "those kids" from taking the necessary courses to be eligible to apply to four-year postsecondary institutions.

"College-ready" equals "work-ready"

A growing body of research supports the affirmation that the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in college or the workforce immediately after high school are nearly identical. Building upon the findings of the 2004 Ready or Not report, Achieve has released the "Math at Work" series. This series identifies the advanced math skills needed for jobs with career potential in five fields — aerospace, construction, health care, information technology and manufacturing — that require either a high school diploma or some education/training less than a four-year degree. The compilations demonstrate that the algebra, geometry, trigonometry and other math skills workers need for these growing industries resemble those needed for entry into postsecondary education.

Myth #7: Most students don't need to take four years of math — or advanced math — or lab science

Some critics oppose graduation requirements that impose four years of math (including advanced math courses such as Algebra II) and "lab" sciences (as opposed to general science courses) on students, claiming that most students' college or career trajectories will not require them to use advanced math or science in the "real world."

Recent research

In both the 1999 and 2006 "Toolbox" studies, Cliff Adelman found that the pre-collegiate factor most closely associated with a student's likelihood of finishing high school, entering a four-year institution, and completing a bachelor's degree within a reasonable amount of time was the "academic intensity" of the high school curriculum. The Carnegie units at the highest end of the academic intensity variable included two or more units of core lab science — biology, chemistry and physics — (or 2.5 or more units of all science). ACT research also indicates that students who take biology, chemistry and physics in high school had the greatest chances of success in college biology, a common course requirement for the general academic core in postsecondary institutions.

The mathematics courses at the highest end of the academic intensity variable in both "Toolbox" studies included 3.75 math units (with no remedial math), and math coursetaking culminating at trigonometry or higher. Adelman adds, "Of all the components of curriculum intensity and quality, none has such an obvious and powerful relationship to ultimate completion of degrees as the highest level of mathematics

one studies in high school. … And the precise point at which opportunity to learn makes the greatest difference in long-term degree completion occurs at the first step *beyond* Algebra 2, whether trigonometry or pre-calculus. To be sure, some Algebra 2 courses in high school include trigonometry, but the preponderance of evidence for the period in which the [students in the sample] went to high school suggests that most trigonometry classes were discrete and distinctly labeled. … If we asked simply what percentage of students at each rung on the math ladder earned a bachelor's degree, the largest leap also takes place between Algebra 2 and trigonometry: a nearly 23 percent increase among all high school graduates, and a 21 percent increase among those whose who continued on to postsecondary education."[31, 32] Requiring four years of math increases the likelihood that students will complete some math beyond Algebra II while still in high school.

ACT research likewise indicates that students who complete some math beyond Algebra II are more likely to be prepared for college algebra, a common requirement in the general academic core required of undergraduates in two- and four-year institutions. The table below indicates the chance a student who has completed specific high school math courses has of meeting ACT's readiness benchmark for college algebra.

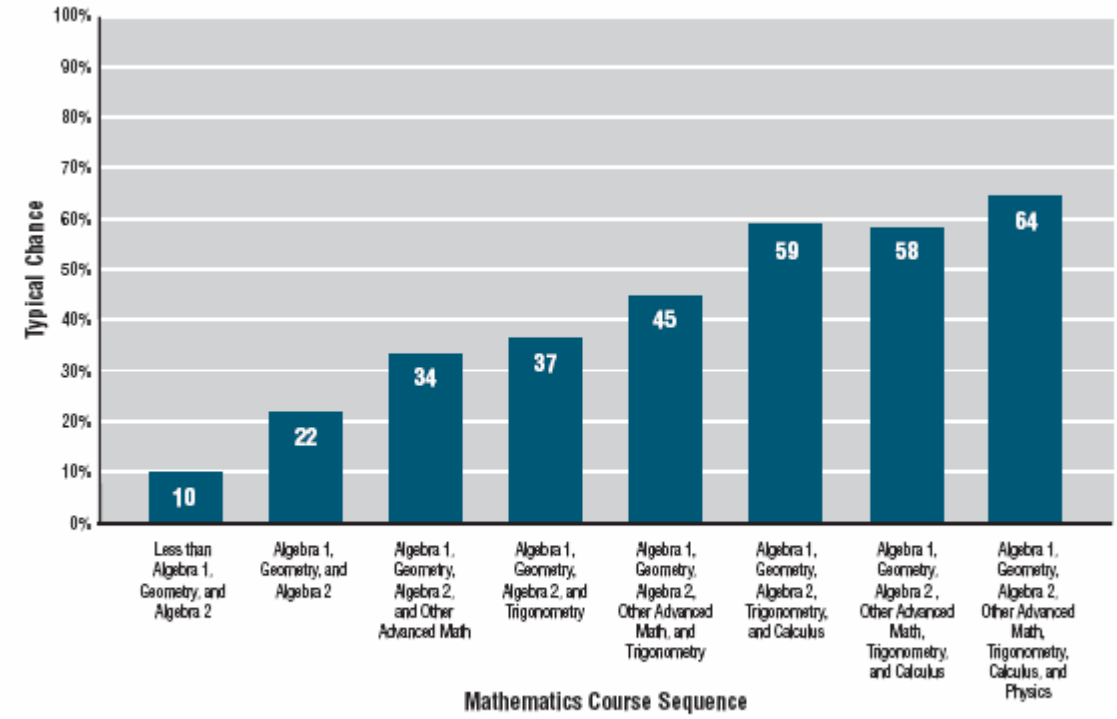


Figure 2: Typical Chances of Meeting the Readiness Benchmark for College Algebra

Source: *Courses Count: Preparing Students for Postsecondary Success*, ACT, 2005

Meanwhile, anecdotal evidence suggests that many students who complete three years of math in high school require remediation their first year of college, simply because they forgot so much when not enrolled in a math course their senior year. Taking four years of mathematics in high school keeps the "math muscles" active and reduces the likelihood that students will forget enough to require developmental math upon college entry.

And some theorize that the value of algebra extends beyond its applicability in school or career, but is helpful in the day-to-day world. In a 1995 essay on the importance of algebra, Zalman Usiskin, the director of the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project, pointed to numerous real-life applications in which many adults make financial and other decisions without using algebra, likening them to travelers to a foreign country who do not speak the native language and do not realize what they've missed. "You can live without it," Usiskin writes, "but you will not appreciate as much of what is going on around you. … You will be more likely to make unwise decisions, and you will find yourself with less control over your life than others who have this knowledge."[33]

Avoiding the pitfalls with essential policy components

Policymakers must keep in mind that certain advanced courses will prove an insurmountable stumbling block to some students with disabilities. If a student with a disability is unable to complete a particular course with proficiency, state policies should provide some options so that students challenged by just one course are not forced to complete an occupational diploma.

Conclusion

No matter what policy options state education leaders pursue, best practice indicates they should always revisit data to see how well state policy approaches are working — and to retool policies as necessary. But policymakers should not let myths dissuade them from approaches that research and experience suggest have positive implications for student success.

Jennifer Dounay, project manager for ECS' High School Policy Center, can be reached at 303.299.3689 or jdounay@ecs.org

Equipping Education Leaders, Advancing Ideas

[1] Clifford Adelman, *Answers in the Tool Box.* [report online] (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1999, accessed 17 December 2007); available from the U.S. Department of Education: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/Toolbox/index.html; Internet.
[2] Clifford Adelman, The Toolbox Revisited: Paths to Degree Completion from High School Through College. [report online] (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 2006, accessed 17 December 2007); available from the U.S. Department of Education: http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/toolboxrevisit/toolbox.pdf; Internet.
[3] California State University System Web site (accessed 3 December, 2007) http://www.csumentor.edu/planning/high_school/subjects.asp and University of California System Web site (accessed 3 December, 2007) http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/undergrad_adm/paths_to_adm/freshman/subject_reqs.html,
[4] Linda Murray, Power Point presentation: *San Jose Unified School District: Keeping the Doors Open for All Students*, (Education Trust West, July 2006, accessed 28 December, 2007); available from: http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/FD706B13-4F58-4885-B984-A3785FFE2B02/0/SJUSDAG_ETLindaVersion.ppt; Education Commission of the States "Highlights of Local Initiatives Database" (Denver: Education Commission of the States, accessed 28 December 2007); available from: http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=876
[5] Education Consortium of San Diego County Web site; accessed 10 July 2008 from http://educatesandiego.org/index.html
[6] OKLA. STAT. ANN. tit. 70, § 11-103.6
[7] Conversation with Jan Ellis and MaryAlice Galloway, Michigan Department of Education, July 24, 2008
[8] South Dakota Department of Education Web site, March 10, 2008 press release, accessed 15 July 2008 from http://doe.sd.gov/pressroom/news.asp?ID=122
[9] Conversation with Rick Melmer, South Dakota Secretary of Education, January 11, 2008.
[10] South Dakota Counts wiki page (accessed 23 July 2008); http://sdcounts.tie.wikispaces.net/ and South Dakota Department of Education "Title II, Part B – Math and Science Partnership (MSP) Web page (accessed 23 July 2008); http://doe.sd.gov/octa/title/IIpartb/index.asp,.
[11] 005 16 CARR 004
[12] Arkansas Department of Education, *Algebra I Endorsement, Grade 8*, (accessed 23 July 2008); http://arkedu.state.ar.us/commemos/attachments/Alg1end_M_S__4-8_since_2002_-_math_5-8_prior.doc,.
[13] ARK. CODE ANN. § 6-13-808; 005 19 CARR 025
[14] N.D. CENT. CODE § 15.1-16-21
[15] News release, "ACCESS Distance Learning to Reach Every High School Ahead of Schedule," July 8, 2008; http://governorpress.alabama.gov/pr/pr-2008-07-08-01-ACCESS_early-video.asp
[16] Conversation with Jan Ellis and MaryAlice Galloway, Michigan Department of Education, July 24, 2008
[17] Clifford Adelman, *Answers in the Tool Box.* [report online] (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1999, accessed 17 December 2007); available from the U.S. Department of Education: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/Toolbox/index.html; Internet.

[18] Michael Griffith, *What Policymakers Need to Know About the Cost of Implementing Lab-Based Science Course Requirements.* [report online] (Denver: Education Commission of the States, 2007, accessed 28 December 2007); available from ECS: http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/74/64/7464.pdf; Internet.
[19] ECS database, "Career/Technical Education: Graduation Requirements," (accessed 24 July 2008); http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=1898
[20] James R. Stone III, Corinne Alfeld, Donna Pearson, Morgan V. Lewis, and Susan Jensen, *Building Academic Skills in Context: Testing the Value of Enhanced Math Learning in CTE.* [report online] (St. Paul: National Research Center for Career and Technical Education, 2006, accessed 24 July 2008); available from NCCTE: http://www.nccte.org/publications/infosynthesis/r&dreport/MathLearningFinalStudy.pdf; Internet.
[21] Stephen Plank, *Career and Technical Education in the Balance: An Analysis of High School Persistence, Academic Achievement, and Postsecondary Expectations.* [report online] (St. Paul: National Research Center for Career and Technical Education, 2001, accessed 25 July 2008); available from NCCTE: http://www.nccte.org/publications/infosynthesis/r%26dreport/CTE%20in%20Blnce_Plank.pdf; Internet.
[22] Julie P. Noble and Diane Schnelker, *Using Hierarchical Modeling to Examine Course Work and ACT Score Relationships Across High Schools.* [report online] (Iowa City: ACT, 2007, accessed 28 July 2008); available from ACT: http://www.act.org/research/researchers/reports/pdf/ACT_RR2007-2.pdf; Internet.
[23] Neelam Kher, William H. Schmidt, Richard T. Houang, Zhiwen Zou, *High School Mathematics Trajectories: Connecting Opportunities to Learn with Student Performance.* [report online] (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 2007, accessed 28 July 2008); available from MSU: http://hub.mspnet.org/media/data/PROMSE_Aera_2007_Paper.pdf?media_000000002418.pdf; Internet.
[24] Sean Kelly, "The Contours of Tracking in North Carolina," *The High School Journal*. Vol. 90, no. 4, (April-May 2007), 15-31.
[25] Andrea Venezia, Michael W. Kirst, Anthony L. Antonio, *Betraying the College Dream: How Disconnected K-12 and Postsecondary Education Systems Undermine Student Aspirations.* [report online] (Stanford: Bridge Project, Stanford Institute for Higher Education Research, 2003, accessed 28 July 2008); available from the Bridge Project: http://www.stanford.edu/group/bridgeproject/betrayingthecollegedream.pdf; Internet.
[26] Michael W. Kirst, Andrea Venezia, Anthony Lising Antonio, "What Have We Learned, and Where Do We Go Next," in *From High School to College: Improving Opportunities for Success in Postsecondary Education*, ed. Michael W. Kirst and Andrea Venezia (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 285-319.
[27] "Understanding College Placement Exams: A Crucial Part of College Preparation," July 11, 2008 posting to "The College Puzzle" blog, http://thecollegepuzzle.blogspot.com/2008/07/understanding-college-placement-exams.html, accessed 28 July 2008
[28] Melissa Roderick, *Closing the Aspirations-Attainment Gap: Implications for High School Reform.* [report online] (New York: MDRC, 2006, accessed 6 August 2008); available from MDRC: http://www.mdrc.org/publications/427/full.pdf; Internet.
[29] C. Jeffrey De Witt, John A. Hansen, Brandon M. Rinkenberger, *Results of Indiana's Annual College and Career Information Survey of Students in Grades 9 and 11, 2007-2008.* [report online] (Bloomington: Center for Evaluation and Education Policy, Indiana University, 2008, accessed 6 August 2008); available from CEEP: http://www.learnmoreindiana.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/2007-2008surveyreport.pdf; Internet.
[30] Erik C. Ness, *Class of 2007 Senior Opinions Survey.* [report online] (Charleston: West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, 2007, accessed 6 August 2008); available from WVHEPC: http://wvhepcdoc.wvnet.edu/resources/Class%20of%202007%20High%20School%20Senior%20Opinions%20Survey%20Attachment.pdf; Internet.
[31] Clifford Adelman, *Answers in the Tool Box.* [report online] (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1999, accessed 17 December 2007); available from the U.S. Department of Education: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/Toolbox/index.html; Internet.
[32] Clifford Adelman, *The Toolbox Revisited: Paths to Degree Completion from High School Through College*. [report online] (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 2006, accessed 17 December 2007); available from the U.S. Department of Education: http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/toolboxrevisit/toolbox.pdf; Internet.
[33] Zalman Usiskin, "Why Is Algebra Important to Learn?," *American Educator*, (Spring 1995), 30-37.

StateNotes

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 810 • Denver, CO 80203-3442 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Virtual High Schools

By Melodye Bush

August 2008

Statewide virtual high schools are state-led schools created by state legislatures or state-level departmental agencies. Most programs are administered by a state's education department. Other programs such as North Dakota's — administered by the Division of Independent Study — fall outside of departmental control.

Virtual high schools serve a variety of functions: Some schools focus on providing core curriculum and credit recovery classes, while others are designed to meet the needs of students who want accelerated learning opportunities and/or more rigorous classes (such as Advanced Placement). Regardless of the curriculum's focus, it needs to meet state quality assurance standards to help ensure that students enrolled in virtual courses meet state graduation standards. Some state programs limit student enrollment to only a few courses per school year, while others give students the opportunity to complete most, if not all, of their education online. As virtual high school programs are expanded, greater attention is needed to ensure that the curriculum is aligned to state standards; that teachers have been trained to teach online courses and that they are properly certified by the state; and that quality is ensured through both evaluating programs and requiring virtual high school students to participate in state assessments.

Highlights:

- Twenty-eight states have established statewide virtual high schools.
- Twenty-five states maintain the local school district as the diploma granting entity. Only four grant diplomas directly.
- Twenty-four state programs offer core curriculum, seven offer supplemental curriculum and 24 offer advanced placement classes as well. Supplemental curriculum is defined as enrichment curriculum.
- Sixteen states provide monetary and/or technical support to the virtual high schools for hardware and software.
- Five states have set a cap ranging from three to six credits per year on the number of courses a student may take.
- Nineteen states have specific requirements or limitations for programs.
- Six states use off-the-shelf commercial curriculum. Nine states use private vendor curriculum (i.e., K12).
- Twenty-seven states of the 28 states with statewide virtual high schools align the virtual high school curriculum to the state's academic standards.
- All but one of the programs are state funded.
- Twenty-two states require teachers to have completed appropriate training for teaching online.
- Twenty-five states require online teachers to meet the same requirements as classroom teachers.
- Twenty-three states require evaluation of programs.
- Twenty-five states require students seeking a diploma to participate in state assessments.

Summary Table
Fifty States and the District of Columbia

State	Established	Issue Diploma	Focus			Cap # courses	Curriculum			Curriculum Alignment	Teach Online	Certified	Evaluation	Assessment
			Core	Supplemental	AP		Commercial	Vendor	Internal					
AL	X		X		X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X
AK														
AZ	X	X	X		X			X		X	X	X	X	X
AR	X		X		X				X	X	X	X	X	X
CA	X		X		X				X	X	X	X	X	X
CO	X		X		X				X	X	X	X	X	X
CT														
DE														
DC														
FL	X		X		X				X	X	X	X	X	X
GA	X		X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X
HI	X			X	X	X			X		X		X	X
ID	X		X[1]		X				X	X	X	X	X	X
IL	X			X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X
IN														
IA	X			X	X		X		X	X	X	X		X
KS														
KY	X		X[2]	X			X		X	X	X	X	X	X
LA	X		X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X
ME														
MD	X		X	X	X			X		X	X	X	X	X
MA														
MI	X		X		X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X
MN														X
MS	X		X		X			X		X	X		X	X
MO	X		X			X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
MT														
NE														
NV														
NH														
NJ														
NM	X	X								X		X	X	X
NY														
NC	X		X		X			X		X	X	X	X	
ND	X	X	X		X					X		X		
OH														
OK														

NOTES:
[1] Idaho also focuses on remediation and dual credit in their online courses.
[2] Kentucky also offers online courses for credit recovery.

State	Established	Issue Diploma	Focus			Cap # courses	Curriculum			Curriculum Alignment	Teach Online	Certified	Evaluation	Assessment
			Core	Supplemental	AP		Commercial	Vendor	Internal					
OR	X		X[3]		X			X		X	X	X	X	
PA														
RI														
SC	X		X	X[4]	X	X				X	X	X	X	
SD	X		X		X			X		X		X	X	X
TN														X
TX	X		X		X			X		X	X	X	X	X
UT	X	X	X							X		X		X
VT														
VA	X		X		X					X		X		X
WA														
WV	X		X		X			X		X			X	X
WI	X		X[5]	X	X		X			X	X	X		X
WY														

NOTES:

[3] Oregon also offers college preparatory courses online.
[4] South Carolina also offers online courses for credit recovery.
[5] Wisconsin also offers online courses for credit recovery.

This StateNote was compiled by Melodye Bush, researcher with the Education Commission of the State, August 2008.

StateNotes

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 810 • Denver, CO 80203-3442 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Adolescent Literacy

By Melodye Bush
September 2008

Overview:

The term "adolescent literacy" refers to the set of skills and abilities that students need in grades 4 through 12 to read, write, and think about the text materials they encounter. Becoming literate is a developmental and lifelong process, which in the 21st century includes becoming literate with electronic and multimedia texts as well as conventional written material. Grade 4 is when students experience a shift in emphasis from learning how to read to learning from reading text. America's adolescents need to be literate not only to succeed in school, but also to succeed in life.

--Reading to Achieve: A Governor's Guide to Adolescent Literacy
(National Governors' Association, 2005)

Reading below a proficient level contributes to decreased ability to comprehend, to apply knowledge and to communicate effectively. Traditionally reading is taught in the primary grades. However, a growing awareness of the need to address the reading skills of adolescents has resulted in states incorporating literacy instruction in their secondary-level teacher preparation and certification requirements, modifying and aligning curriculum standards, and establishing state policies to guide change.

In summary:

- Twenty-three states require interventions such as tutoring, additional reading time and/or the use of a different instructional approach.
- Thirteen states target students who get poor grades for diagnostic reading assessments.
- Seven states have established initiatives such as literacy report cards to build momentum for improving adolescent literacy. A literacy report card might include progress being made in student test scores, curriculum alignment and teacher training. Other states might simply include adolescent literacy gains in their annual report cards.
- Fourteen states have aligned the literacy standards across levels.
- Eleven states provide support for local efforts. "Support" can be a cadre of state department staff offering guidance in drawing up the plan, state convening of regional literacy summits, or monetary supports for research materials.
- Teacher preparation/certification requirements for teaching adolescents to read have been strengthened in 17 states.
- A specialized certification/endorsement in adolescent literacy is available only in Florida.
- Fourteen states offer schoolwide professional development in adolescent literacy instruction.
- Missouri and North Carolina have included a literacy component in their mentoring/induction programs.
- No state has offered incentives to school principals to strengthen literacy programs.
- Policy in only one state (Florida) designates a centralized office or coordinator. In practice, seven additional states have designated a centralized office or coordinator.
- State standards explicitly reflect adolescent literacy expectations in 13 states.
- Sixteen states have significant activities occurring that are not reflected in state statute or board rules and regulations. Many meaningful initiatives have occurred without state statute or board action driving the activity.

Legend:
X = State policy exists.
P = Broadly "in practice" throughout the state but not driven by state policy

Summary Table
Fifty States and the District of Columbia

State	State Requires Intervention	State Requires Diagnostic Assessment	Literacy Report Card	Aligned Literacy Standard	Support Local Literacy Plan	Strengthen Teacher Prep./Cert.	Spec. Certif.	School-wide Prof. Dev.	Mentoring Induction Program	State Office of Adolesc. Literacy	Standards Reflect Adolesc. Literacy	Other Efforts
AL				X	P	X					X	X
AK												
AZ	X	X										X
AR	X	X	X	X	X			X		P	X	
CA	X					X		X				
CO												
CT	P	X	X	X		X					X	
DE												X
DC												
FL	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
GA	X	X		X		X				P	X	
HI												
ID						X		X				X
IL	X		X		X			X				X
IN	X											
IA	X											
KS												
KY	X	X		X	X			X			X	X
LA						X					X	
ME	P											
MD	X											
MA			X			X						X
MI						X					X	
MN	X	X		X	P	X		X				
MS												
MO	X								X			
MT												

	State Requires Intervention	State Requires Diagnostic Assessment	Literacy Report Card	Aligned Literacy Standard	Support Local Literacy Plan	Strength. Teacher Prep./Cert.	Spec. Certif.	School-wide Prof. Dev.	Mentoring Induction Program	State Office of Adoles. Literacy	Standards Reflect Expect.	Other Efforts
NE												
NV												
NH												
NJ					X							X
NM	X		X		X	X		X				X
NY	P	X		X	P	X				P	X	
NC	X			X	X	X			X		X	X
ND												
OH	X[1]				X			X		P		
OK	X	X		X		X		X				
OR												
PA												
RI	X	X	X		X			X		P		X
SC	X											X
SD												
TN	X		X			X		X				
TX	X	X		X		P		X				
UT												
VT												
VA	X	X		X	X	X				P	X	X
WA	X	X			X			X				
WV				X							X	
WI	X			X	P	X					X	X
WY												
Total X Total P	23	13	7 1	14	11 4	17 1	1	14	2	1 6	13	15

This StateNote was compiled by Melodye Bush, researcher with the Education Commission of the States, September 2008.

Note:

[1] High school students only.

StateNotes

Kindergarten

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 810 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

State Statutes Regarding Kindergarten:

Policies concerning district offering of and student attendance in full- and half-day kindergarten programs

Updated September 2008

Compulsory School Attendance

- Only eight states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands have a compulsory school age of 5 that effectively, if not explicitly, mandates kindergarten attendance for all children.
- Compulsory attendance ages in the other states range from ages 6-8.

Kindergarten Entrance Age

- Only four states (California, Connecticut, Michigan and Vermont), the District of Columbia and the Virgin Islands have cut-off dates between December 1 and January 1. This practice leads to a robust mix of 4-year-olds and 5-year-olds enrolled in kindergarten.
- Thirty-five states and Puerto Rico have kindergarten entrance cut-off dates between August 31 and October 16. These policies lead to fewer 4-year-olds entering kindergarten, but classrooms consist of a combination of 4- and 5-year-olds entering each fall.
- Four states (Alaska, Hawaii, Indiana and Missouri) have cut-off dates on or before August 15. While legislative intent cannot be determined without additional research, it can be supposed that these states want to ensure all children are 5 years old before they enter kindergarten.
- Another six states (Colorado, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania) leave the entrance-age question up to local district decision.
- One state, Ohio, allows local districts to choose a cut-off date of either September 30 or August 1.

District Offering of, and Pupil Attendance in, Kindergarten

- Forty-three states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands mandate that school districts offer at least half-day of kindergarten. programs
- Fifteen states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands mandate that age-eligible children attend at least a half-day of kindergarten.

District Offering of, and Pupil Attendance in, Full-Day Kindergarten

- Ten states mandate that school districts offer full-day kindergarten programs.
- Only two states (Louisiana and West Virginia) mandate that age-eligible children attend full-day kindergarten/

KEY:
M = Mandatory
P = Permissive
LEA = Local Education Agency

State	Compulsory School Age[1]	Kindergarten Entrance Age[2]	District Offering of Kindergarten	Pupil Attendance in Kindergarten	District Offering of Full-Day Kindergarten	Year Full-Day Law Enacted	Pupil Attendance in Full-Day Kindergarten
Alabama	7	5 on or before September 1	M	P	M	1990	P
Alaska[3]	7	5 before August 15	P	P	P		P
Arizona	6	5 before September 1	M[4]	P	P		P
Arkansas	5[5]	5 on or before September 15 (In 2009-10, the date will change to on or before September 1. In 2010-11 the date will change to on or before August 15. Thereafter the date will be on or before August 1.)	M	M	M[6]		P
California	6	5 on or before December 2	M	P	P[7]		P
Colorado	6	LEA Option	M	P	P		P
Connecticut	5[8]	5 on or before January 1	M	M	P		P
Delaware	5	5 on or before August 31	M	M	M[9]	Law passed in 2006, took effect in 2008-09	P
District of Columbia	5	5 on or before December 31	M[10]	M	P		P
Florida	6[11]	5 on or before September 1	M	P	P		P
Georgia	6	5 by September 1	M	P	M[12]	1985	P
Hawaii	6	5 on or before August 1	M	P	P		P
Idaho	7	5 on or before September 1	P	P	P		P
Illinois	7	5 on or before September 1[13]	M	P[14]	P[15]		P
Indiana	7	5 on or before August 1	M	P	P		P
Iowa	6	5 on or before September 15	M	P	P		P
Kansas	7	5 on or before August 31	M	P	P		P

State	Compulsory School Age[1]	Kindergarten Entrance Age[2]	District Offering of Kindergarten	Pupil Attendance in Kindergarten	District Offering of Full-Day Kindergarten	Year Full-Day Law Enacted	Pupil Attendance in Full-Day Kindergarten
Kentucky	6	5 by October 1	M	P	P		P
Louisiana	7	5 on or before September 30	M	M	M	1990	M[16]
Maine	7	5 on or before October 15	M	P	P[17]		P
Maryland	5	5 by September 1	M	M[18]	M	2002	P
Massachusetts	6	LEA Option	M	P	P[19]		P
Michigan	6	5 on or before December 1[20]	M[21]	P	P		P
Minnesota[22]	7	At least 5 on September 1	M	P	P		P
Mississippi	6	5 on or before September 1	M	P	M		P
Missouri	7	5 before August 1 (LEA option between August 1 and October 1 for metropolitan districts)	M	P	P		P
Montana	7	5 on or before September 10	M	P	P		P
Nebraska	6	5 on or before October 15	M	P	P		P
Nevada	7	5 on or before September 30	M	M[23]	P		P
New Hampshire	6	LEA Option	P	P	P		P
New Jersey	6	LEA Option	P	P	P		P
New Mexico	5	5 before September 1	M	M	P[24]	2000	P
New York	6	LEA Option	P[25]	P	P		P
North Carolina	7	5 on or before August 31	M	P	M[26]		P
North Dakota	7	5 before September 1	P	P	P		P
Ohio	6	September 30 or August 1[27]	M	M[28]	P		P
Oklahoma	5	5 on or before September 1	M	M	P[29]		P
Oregon	7	5 on or before September 1	M	P	P		P
Pennsylvania	8	LEA Option	P	P	P		P
Puerto Rico	5	5 on or before August 31	M	M	P		P
Rhode Island	6	5 on or before September 1	M	M	P		P
South Carolina	5[30]	5 on or before September 1	M	M	M[31]	1998	P
South Dakota	6[32]	5 on or before September 1	M	M	P		P
Tennessee	6	5 on or before September 30	M[33]	M	P		P
Texas	6	5 on or before September 1	M	P	P		P
Utah	6	5 on or before September 2	M	P	P		P
Vermont	6	5 on or before January 1[34]	M	P	P		P

State	Compulsory School Age[1]	Kindergarten Entrance Age[2]	District Offering of Kindergarten	Pupil Attendance in Kindergarten	District Offering of Full-Day Kindergarten	Year Full-Day Law Enacted	Pupil Attendance in Full-Day Kindergarten
Virgin Islands	5	5 on or before December 31	M	M	P		P
Virginia	5[35]	5 on or before September 30	M	M	P		P
Washington	8	5 on or before August 31	M	P	P		P
West Virginia	6	5 on or before September 1	M	M	M	1996	M[36]
Wisconsin	6	5 on or before September 1	M	P	P[37]	1987	P
Wyoming	7	5 on or before September 15	M	P	P		P

[1] Most states allow parents to apply for a waiver if they do not wish for their children to attend kindergarten. In Nevada, Rhode Island, Tennessee and West Virginia the compulsory school attendance age is over 5. Kindergarten attendance is mandatory, thereby allowing parents to hold children out of kindergarten until they reach 6 years of age.
[2] Children may begin kindergarten in the school year that they reach the specified age by the specified date. For example, in Hawaii, a child may begin kindergarten at age 4 as long as his 5th birthday is during the school year and prior to December 31.
[3] Alaska has no state law regarding district offering of kindergarten.
[4] In Arizona, "a district is exempt from establishing a kindergarten program if it files with the department of education an exemption claim which states that the establishment of a kindergarten program will interfere with the work of, or maintenance of efficiency in the grades and that a kindergarten program is not in the best interests of the district" (AZ ST § 15-703).
[5] In Arkansas, parents may elect for the child not to attend kindergarten if the child will not be age 6 on September 15 of that particular school year. In such a case, the parent must file a signed kindergarten waiver form with the local district administrative office.
[6] The Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools section of Arkansas's Rules and Regulations requires that districts offer a full-day kindergarten.
[7] In California, full-day kindergarten is prohibited by one Education Code section and allowed in another. Education Code Section 46111 prohibits kindergarten from exceeding four hours (excluding recesses) unless children are participating in an Early Primary Program as allowed under Education Code Section 8970-8974. Ed. Code Section 8973 specifically says that kindergarten may exceed four hours if the program is not longer than the rest of the primary program and if there are opportunities for both active and quiet activities.
[8] In Connecticut, the parent of a 5-year-old child shall have the option of not sending the child to school until the child is 6 years old. The parent of a 6-year-old child shall have the option of not sending the child to school until the child is 7 years old. The parent shall exercise such option by personally appearing at the school district office and signing an option form.
[9] The laws regarding full-day kindergarten become effective in each school district "upon a confirming vote by the local school district board and upon a specific appropriation by the General Assembly to fund the costs of full-day kindergarten" (75 Del. Laws 440).
[10] Because compulsory school age is 5 in the District of Columbia, all public schools are required to offer kindergarten to accommodate attendance for 5-year-old children. DC Code Section 38-202.
[11] In Florida, children are not required to attend school until they are 6 years old. If a child does not attend kindergarten at age 5, however, s/he will be required to attend kindergarten when s/he starts school at age 6.
[12] In Georgia, full-day kindergarten is defined as 4.5 hours per day.
[13] In Illinois, districts may offer kindergarten to children age 4 to 6. Only one year of kindergarten attendance, however, will be paid for by the state unless a child who entered kindergarten at age 5 requires a second year of kindergarten for developmental purposes.
[14] In Illinois, "once a student has been enrolled in kindergarten in a public school, that child falls under compulsory attendance laws (IL ST CH 105 § 5/26-2).
[15] In Illinois, if a district offers full-day kindergarten, it also must provide a half-day kindergarten. Parents are not required to send their children to kindergarten.

[16] In Louisiana, kindergarten is mandatory for entrance to 1st grade unless parents request their children be tested for readiness to enter 1st grade. Readiness criteria are established by each parish.
[17] In Maine, the Department of Education encourages districts to offer full-day kindergarten.
[18] Local boards of education may adopt regulations permitting a 4-year-old child, upon request by the parent or guardian, to be admitted to kindergarten if the local system determines that the child demonstrates the capabilities warranting early admission. In addition, the regulations maintain the option for parents to request a "Level of Maturity Waiver" for the local board to exempt from mandatory attendance for one year a kindergarten-eligible child.
[19] In Massachusetts, a state grant program allows districts to apply for a grant to fund full-day kindergarten.
[20] In Michigan, if a district offers semiannual promotions, a child may enroll in kindergarten for the second semester if s/he is at least 5 on March 1 of the school year.
[21] In Michigan, districts must offer a program for all students who will be 5 on or before December 1. This program does not have to be traditional kindergarten. For example, 5-year-olds may be served in a mixed-age classroom with other children. Programming for 5-year-olds must be available for one-half of the hours of the other grades.
[22] In Minnesota, districts may establish an earlier school entrance age. Districts may apply for an exemption from offering kindergarten if it would cause “extraordinary hardship.” Districts are permitted to offer full-day kindergarten.
[23] In Nevada, if a child is 6 years old and has not completed kindergarten, s/he must complete kindergarten before being admitted to 1st grade. If a child is 7 years old and has not completed kindergarten or 1st grade, s/he must undergo an assessment by the district to determine whether he is developmentally prepared to be admitted to the 1st grade. If the district determines that the child is not so prepared, s/he must be admitted to kindergarten.
[24] In New Mexico, full-day kindergarten is being phased in from 2000-05. Beginning in the year 2000 and each subsequent year until 2005, one-fifth of New Mexico’s school districts will be eligible to apply to the state for full-day kindergarten funding. Establishment of full-day kindergarten programs will be voluntary on the part of school districts, and student participation shall be voluntary on the part of parents.
[25] In New York, district offering of kindergarten is permissive, however, “a person over 5 and under 21 years of age. . .is entitled to attend the public schools maintained in the district in which such person resides without the payment of tuition” (NY EDUC § 3202).
[26] Full-day kindergarten is universally available in North Carolina and has been since 1976.
[27] Districts may choose to set the cut-off date for September 30 or August 1. (OH ST § 3321.01)
[28] In Ohio, students must complete kindergarten, or by parent request, must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Pupil Personnel Services Committee that they possess the social, emotional and cognitive skills necessary for 1st grade.
[29] Beginning with the 2011-12 school year, it will be mandatory that districts offer full day kindergarten. However, the duty to offer full-day kindergarten “may be satisfied by intra-district transfer to a school offering full-day kindergarten, by transferring kindergarten children to other school districts which will accept them and can provide kindergarten for such children, or by contracting for classroom space with a licensed public or licensed private child care provider based upon selection criteria established by the district” (OK ST T 70 § 18-108).
[30] In South Carolina, if a child is not 6 on or before September 1 of the school year, his parent may elect for him not to attend kindergarten by signing a written document with the school district.
[31] In South Carolina, districts are required to offer full-day kindergarten unless they apply for a waiver due to lack of space and prohibitive cost. Parents may choose a half-day program for their children.
[32] In South Dakota, a waiver of the compulsory attendance requirement for children under 7 is granted upon the request of the parents.
[33] In Tennessee, kindergarten programs must offer a minimum of four hours per day.
[34] In Vermont, districts may set the entrance age cut-off date anywhere between August 31 and January 1 of the same school year.
[35] In Virginia, a child is in compliance with compulsory attendance laws if he is attending any public or approved private pre-kindergarten program.
[36] In West Virginia, students must attend full-day kindergarten unless, under extraordinary circumstances, a readiness test is passed for entrance into the 1st grade.
[37] In Wisconsin, districts are required to offer full-day kindergarten for low-income students.

This ECS StateNote *was originally compiled in August 2001 by Jessica McMaken, ECS Research Assistant. If you have any questions about this* StateNote*, or would like to provide updates, please contact ECS’ Early Learning Initiative at 303.299.3662 or ecs@ecs.org.*

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

StateNotes

Accountability

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 810 • Denver, CO 80203-3442 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

HIGH SCHOOL-LEVEL ACCOUNTABILITY

By Melodye Bush
December 2008

Accountability refers to the systematic collection, analysis and use of information to hold schools, educators and others responsible for student performance. Standards-based accountability refers to collecting and reporting information based on student progress on achieving established standards.

To determine the quality of schools, states select one set of indicators—typically measures of gains in student achievement or elements perceived to influence those gains. For reporting to the public, most states select a broader (and/or sometimes different) set of indicators. The "indicators used for reporting" provide parents and the community with a richer picture of school performance, but they are not the basis for determining school quality. For this *StateNote*'*s* purposes, these indicators are reflected as an "s," or "secondary." Only the core "indicators/measures of quality" are used to determine performance and these are considered "primary" or "p."

Primary and secondary labels are assigned to state policies establishing particular measures (or indicators). In addition, this *StateNote* compares how states notify and provide support to schools, sanctions and rewards. Policies relate to high school-level (not district-level) accountability.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires states to prepare and disseminate an annual state report card. The state agency is to ensure each local school district collects appropriate data and includes this data at the district level and for each school in its annual report card. Information to be reported includes:

- Aggregated achievement information on state assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics
- Disaggregated student group (race/ethnicity, disability, socioeconomic level, gender, migrant status, Limited English Proficient) achievement data on statewide assessments
- Most recent two-year trend data reported by subject area and grade level in areas where assessments are required
- Comparison data between actual achievement levels of each group of students to annual student achievement goals
- Aggregated information on state indicators used to determine adequate yearly program (AYP)
- Performance of students not tested, disaggregated by student subgroups listed above
- High school graduation rates, one elementary school indicator and one middle school indicator
- Performance of local education agencies (LEAs) towards making AYP, including identifying numbers, names and percentages of schools in need of improvement
- Data on teacher qualifications, including number of teachers with emergency certification and percentage of classes not taught by "highly qualified" teachers.

Because NCLB requires these same measures to be used in public reports in every state, they are not included here. Subgroup comparisons of assessment data occur in most states as part of NCLB requirements. They are, however, federal instead of state mandate. Only state-mandated indicators/measures used for reporting are included in this *StateNote*. All data is current as of October 31, 2008.

Performance Indicators

Summary Tables
Fifty States, District of Columbia and U.S. Territories

Legend:
p = Primary indicator used to determine school or district performance.
s = Secondary indicator (reporting purpose only) used to better inform the about the performance of its schools.
p/s= Used for both determination of school performance and for public reporting.
Participation rate = Number of students who participated in the statewide assessment

Primary and Secondary Indicators

	AL	AK	AZ	AR	CA	CO	CT	DE	DC	FL	GA	HI	ID	IL
Student Indicators:														
Advanced placement course access					s									
AP course participation														
Assessment scores/achievement	p/s	p	p	p	p	p	p/s	p	p	p/s	p	p	p	p
ACT and/or SAT scores				s	s	p	s				p		p	s
Attendance rates/truancy	p/s	p			p						p			p
Discipline/safety	p/s	s	s	s	s	s	s					s	s	
Dropout rate	p/s		p		s	s	p				p	p	p	
Number of English language learners/special needs			p				p/s							
Expulsion/suspension rate					s									p
Graduation/completion rate	p/s	p/s	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p/s	p	p	p	p
Mobility rate														p
Participation in career technical programs					s									
Participation rate									p					
Percent achieving proficiency		s						s						s
Percent passing graduation exam		s			s						p			
Percent not tested		s						s						
Postsecondary remediation rate				s										
Promotion/retention rates							p/s							p
Special education enrollment							p/s							
Student/administrator ratio														s
Student/teacher ratio											s			s
Transition to postsecondary education	p/s				s									
Student/school improvement in academic performance		s		s		p				p		s	s	
Professional Staff Indicators:														
Attendance														
Diversity						s								
Evaluation													s	
Experience								s						
Leadership													s	
Preparation/Certification													s	
Salary levels				s										
Professional/staff development					s	s								
Qualifications		s										s		
Working in area of certification					s									
Program Indicators:														
Business/industry partnerships		s												
Graduate follow-up data							p							
School accreditation status		s										s		
Supplemental instruction services							p/s							
Parent and/or community involvement		s	s		s			s				s	s	s
Parent satisfaction														
Expenditures and use of resources	s		s	s	s	s		s			s		s	s
Report to taxpayers	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s

Primary and Secondary Indicators

	IN	IA	KS	KY	LA	ME	MD	MA	MI	MN	MS	MO	MT	NE
Student Indicators:														
Advanced placement course access										p				
AP course participation	p													
Assessment scores/achievement	p	p/s	p	s	s	s	s	p	s	p/s	s		p	
ACT and/or SAT scores												s		s
Attendance rates/truancy		p	p	p/s			p	p/s		p	s	s		
Discipline/safety				s						p/s				
Dropout rate	s	p		s	p						s	s	p	
Number of English language learners/special needs														
Expulsion/suspension rate	s													
Graduation/completion rate	p	p	p	p		p	p	p/s	p	p	p	p	p	p
Mobility rate														
Participation in career technical programs														
Participation rate					p	p		s	p	p	p	p	p	p
Percent achieving proficiency														
Percent passing graduation exam														
Percent not tested														
Postsecondary remediation rate														
Promotion/retention rates	s			s					s					
Special education enrollment														
Student/administrator ratio														
Student/teacher ratio														
Transition to postsecondary education		p										s		
Student/school improvement in academic performance		s	s		s				s		s			
Professional Staff Indicators:														
Attendance														
Diversity										x				
Evaluation														
Experience												x		
Leadership														
Preparation/Certification												x		
Salary levels														
Professional/staff development														
Qualifications			p			s								
Working in area of certification														
Program Indicators:														
Business/industry partnerships														
Graduate follow-up data														
School accreditation status			s						s					
Supplemental instruction services														
Parent and/or community involvement				s					s					
Parent satisfaction										p				
Expenditures and use of resources	s	s												
Report to taxpayers	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	p	s	s	s	s

Primary and Secondary Indicators

	NV	NH	NJ	NM	NY	NC	ND	OH	OK	OR	PA	RI	SC
Student Indicators:													
Advanced placement course access													
AP course participation		s	s				s		p				
Assessment scores/achievement		s				s		s	p				
ACT and/or SAT scores			s						p				
Attendance rates/truancy	p	s	s				s		p		s	p	s
Discipline/safety	s	p								s			
Dropout rate	p/s	p/s	p/s						p	s	s		
Number of English language learners/special needs			s						s				
Expulsion/suspension rate		s										s	
Graduation/completion rate	p	p/s	p/s	p/s	p/s	p	p/s	p/s	p/s	p	p/s	p	p
Mobility rate													
Participation in career technical programs													
Participation rate	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p/s		p	p	p	p
Percent achieving proficiency										s			
Percent passing graduation exam													s
Percent not tested													
Postsecondary remediation rate	s							s	p				
Promotion/retention rates													
Special education enrollment													
Student/administrator ratio													
Student/teacher ratio													s
Transition to postsecondary education		s	s										
Student/school improvement in academic performance			s										
Professional Staff Indicators:													
Attendance	p											s	s
Diversity										s			
Evaluation													
Experience													
Leadership													
Preparation/Certification											s		
Salary levels													
Professional/staff development	s		s										
Qualifications		s									s	s	
Working in area of certification													
Program Indicators:													
Business/industry partnerships													
Graduate follow-up data											s		
School accreditation status													
Supplemental instruction services												s	
Parent and/or community involvement										s		s	
Parent satisfaction												s	
Expenditures and use of resources										s			s
Report to taxpayers	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s

Primary and Secondary Indicators

	SD	TN	TX	UT	VT	VA	WA	WV	WI	WY		PR	VI
Student Indicators:													
Advanced placement course access													
AP course participation			p			s		s	p				
Assessment scores/achievement	s	s	p/s	s		s		p	p			p	p
ACT and/or SAT scores			p					s					
Attendance rates/truancy			p	s	s	s		s	p/s	s			p
Discipline/safety				s	s	s							
Dropout rate		s	p	s	s	s		p/s	p/s				p/s
Number of English language learners/special needs			p										
Expulsion/suspension rate													
Graduation/completion rate	p/s	p	p/s	p	p/s	p/s	p	p/s	p/s	p/s		p/s	s
Mobility				s									
Participation in career technical programs					s	s		s					s
Participation rate	p	p		p	p	p	p	p/s				p	
Percent achieving proficiency													
Percent passing graduation exam		s	p										
Percent not tested	s		p			s							
Postsecondary remediation rate													
Promotion/retention rates									p				
Special education enrollment			p										
Student/administrator ratio					s								
Student/teacher ratio			s	s	s								
Transition to postsecondary education			p		s				p				p/s
Student/school improvement in academic performance	s				s		s						
Professional Staff Indicators:													
Attendance													
Diversity													
Evaluation													
Experience													
Leadership													
Preparation/Certification													
Salary levels													
Professional/staff development													
Qualifications		s		s		s		s	s			s	
Working in area of certification						s							
Program Indicators:													
Business/industry partnerships													
Graduate follow-up data													
School accreditation status						s							
Supplemental instruction services													
Parent and/or community involvement				s									
Parent satisfaction													
Expenditures and use of resources		s	s	s	s			s					
Report to taxpayers	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s			

In addition to these primary and secondary indicators, a few emerging indicators merit mentioning.

Student Indicators:

- The percent of students taking alternate assessments is being reported in Michigan, Ohio, Virginia and Wisconsin.
- Learning gains are tracked in Florida.
- Indiana and Virginia are reporting on the percent of students earning international baccalaureate diplomas.
- Michigan, Ohio, Virginia and Wisconsin collect and report data on the percent of students earning credit in dual enrollment.
- Student transitions from high school directly to careers and workforce readiness are of interest in California, Kentucky, Ohio, New Jersey, Tennessee, Vermont and Wisconsin.

Program Indicators:

- School climate is reported in Delaware, Hawaii and Idaho.
- Data on school facilities is required in California and Idaho.
- Career/technical program data is required in California and career counseling is required in Vermont.
- Arizona schools must report data on the instructional program and Oregon schools must report on alternative education programs.
- The social services available in schools are reported in Arizona, California, Idaho and Vermont.

State Notification and Support Policies

Once the data related to the specific performance indicators have been collected, submitted to and reviewed by staff, the majority of the state education agencies are required to provide notice to schools falling below expectations. Under the No Child Left Behind Act, agencies are required to have a plan in place for assisting schools that have been designated as low-performing schools.

Highlights:

- Thirty-three states require written warning be provided to low-performing schools. Typically, such notice indicates the areas where improvement is required and describes sanctions the school will face if improvements are not made.
- The majority of the states–44 states and the District of Columbia—do not provide additional funding to low-performing schools.
- Forty-four states require a low-performing school to create and implement an initial improvement plan.
- If a school continues to be low-performing after the improvement plan has been initiated, 23 states require another entity to either create or assist in the creation of an improvement plan.

State Notification and Support Policies
Summary Table

Fifty States, District of Columbia and U.S. Territories

Legend:

y = yes	n=no	na=not available	u=unclear

	AL	AK	AZ	AR	CA	CO	CT	DE	DC	FL	GA
Is the state required to provide written warning?	y	y	y	y	y	y	u	y	n	n	n
Is the state or another entity required to provide technical assistance?	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	n	y	y
Is the state required to provide additional funding to a low-performing school?	n	n	n	y	y	n	y	n	n	n	n
Is the low-performing school required to create and implement an improvement plan?	y	y	y	y	y	n	y	y	n	y	n
Is another entity, such as the state, required to create an improvement plan for a low-performing school?	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	y

	HI	ID	IL	IN	IA	KS	KY	LA	ME	MD	MA
Is the state required to provide written warning?	u	n	n	y	n	y	y	y	y	y	y
Is the state or another entity required to provide technical assistance?	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Is the state required to provide additional funding to a low-performing school?	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
Is the low-performing school required to create and implement an improvement plan?	y	n	y	n	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Is another entity, such as the state, required to create an improvement plan for a low-performing school?	y	y	5th yr.	y	y	n	y	y	n	n	n

	MI	MN	MS	MO	MT	NE	NV	NH	NJ	NM	NY
Is the state required to provide written warning?	n	n	y	n	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Is the state or another entity required to provide technical assistance?	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Is the state required to provide additional funding to a low-performing school?	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	y
Is the low-performing school required to create and implement an improvement plan?	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Is another entity, such as the state, required to create an improvement plan for a low-performing school?	y	n	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	n

	NC	ND	OH	OK	OR	PA	RI	SC	SD	TN	TX
Is the state required to provide written warning?	n	y	y	y	y	y	n	n	n	y	y
Is the state or another entity required to provide technical assistance?	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Is the state required to provide additional funding to a low-performing school?	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	n
Is the low-performing school required to create and implement an improvement plan?	y	y	y	n	y	n	y	y	y	y	y
Is another entity, such as the state, required to create an improvement plan for a low-performing school?	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	y	n	n	n

	UT	VT	VA	WA	WV	WI	WY			PR	VI
Is the state required to provide written warning?	n	y	n	n	y	y	y			n	na
Is the state or another entity required to provide technical assistance?	y	y	y	y	y	y	y			y	na
Is the state required to provide additional funding to a low-performing school?	n	n	n	y	n	n	n			n	na
Is the low-performing school required to create and implement an improvement plan?	y	y	y	y	y	y	y			n	na
Is another entity, such as the state, required to create an improvement plan for a low-performing school?	n	n	n	n	y	y	y			y	na

State Sanction Policies

Some of the thorniest requirements of NCLB concern the consequences for chronically low-performing schools. A particularly challenging provision requires that if a school fails to meet its state's adequate yearly progress (AYP) requirements for five consecutive years, the school's district must create a plan to restructure the school in one of the following ways:

- Reopen the school as a public charter school
- Replace all or most of the school staff (which may include the principal) who are relevant to the school's failure to make AYP
- Enter into a contract with an entity, such as a private management company with a demonstrated record of effectiveness, to operate the school as a public school
- Turn the operation of the school over to the state education agency, if permitted under state law and agreed to by the state
- Any other major restructuring of a school's governance arrangement.[1]

Two of the more controversial sanctions are state takeovers of schools and school districts, and reconstitution of schools. In a state takeover, the state legislature, the state board of education or a court charges the state department of education or another designated entity (such as the mayor) with managing a school district or a school. Generally speaking, a reconstitution involves creating a new philosophy, developing a new curriculum and hiring new staff at a low-performing school. Some states and school districts include other components within this approach as well, such as reducing teacher/student ratios in a low-performing school. State and school district officials often cite the following chronic problems as the basis for reconstitutions:

- Low attendance rates and graduation rates, and high dropout rates
- Poor performance on standardized tests, as well as a failure to show significant improvement in such performance
- Poor morale among school community members (e.g., discouraged staff, disgruntled parents and alienated students)
- Deteriorating school facilities.

Before a state or school district resorts to such a dramatic action, it usually notifies a poorly performing school of the need for improvement. After a given time period, if the school fails to improve its performance, the state or school district steps in and reconstitutes it. Displaced principals and teachers sometimes may reapply for their old jobs, but they and other candidates have to accept the new philosophy at the school in order to be hired.[2]

Highlights:

- Currently, policy in 18 states authorizes placing a school on probation.
- Twenty-two states have the authority to remove the accreditation of a school.
- Corrective actions increase in severity with the length of time the school has been low-performing. They start with developing a new improvement plan and move upward to school takeover and closure.
- Forty-three states have established policies to allow or require reconstitution of staff of a low-performing school.
- Eighteen states allow low-performing schools to be closed and reopened as public charter schools.
- Most state policies provide a succession of sanctions for academic problems, with takeovers as the ultimate intervention. Twenty-nine states are able to take over or require a take over of a low-performing school district. Twenty-three states are able to take over or require a takeover of a low-performing school.
- Contracting out the operation of an existing school is a significant decision that affects many in the district and the school's community. Currently, 32 states and the District of Columbia have this authority.
- Twenty-eight states authorize some other form of major restructuring.

[1] State Policies for School Restructuring, compiled by Todd Ziebarth, December 2004 for the Education Commission of the States.
[2] State Takeovers and Reconstitutions, updated March 2004, written by Todd Ziebarth as an ECS Policy Brief with funding by the Joyce Foundation.

Sanctions for Low-Performing High Schools

Summary Table

Fifty States, District of Columbia and U.S. Territories

Legend:

y = yes	n=no	na=not available	u=unclear

Sanctions for Low-Performing High Schools	AL	AK	AZ	AR	CA	CO	CT	DE	DC	FL	GA
Does the state have the authority to place a school on probation?	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	n	y	n
Does the state have the authority to remove a low-performing school's accreditation?	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	y	n
Does the state have the authority to reconstitute staff?	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Does the state have the authority to reopen the school as a public charter school?	n	y	n	y	y	y	y	y	y	n	y
Does the state have the authority to take over the school?	y	y	y	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	y
Does the state have the authority to take over a school district?	y	y	n	y	y	n	y	y	n	n	n
Does the state have the authority to contract with an outside entity to operate the school?	y	n	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Can the state require some other major restructuring?	y	n	n	y	n	n	y	y	n	y	y

Sanctions for Low-Performing High Schools	HI	ID	IL	IN	IA	KS	KY	LA	ME	MD	MA
Does the state have the authority to place a school on probation?	y	n	y	n	y	y	n	y	n	y	y
Does the state have the authority to remove a low-performing school's accreditation?	n	n	y	n	y	y	n	y	y	y	y
Does the state have the authority to reconstitute staff?	y	y	y	n	n	y	n	y	y	y	y
Does the state have the authority to reopen the school as a public charter school?	y	y	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n
Does the state have the authority to take over the school?	n	y	y	y	n	n	n	y	n	y	n
Does the state have the authority to take over a school district?	n	y	y	n	y	n	y	n	y	y	y
Does the state have the authority to contract with an outside entity to operate the school?	y	y	y	y	n	n	n	y	n	y	y
Can the state require some other major restructuring?	y	n	y	y	y	y	y	y	n	y	y

Sanctions for Low-Performing High Schools	MI	MN	MS	MO	MT	NE	NV	NH	NJ	NM	NY
Does the state have the authority to place a school on probation?	n	n	y	y	y	y	y	n	n	y	y
Does the state have the authority to remove a low-performing school's accreditation?	y	n	y	y	y	y	n	n	y	y	y
Does the state have the authority to reconstitute staff?	y	n	y	y	y	n	y	y	y	y	y
Does the state have the authority to reopen the school as a public charter school?	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	y

Sanctions for Low-Performing High Schools	MI	MN	MS	MO	MT	NE	NV	NH	NJ	NM	NY
Does the state have the authority to take over the school?	y	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	y	y
Does the state have the authority to take over a school district?	y	n	y	y	n	n	y	n	y	y	y
Does the state have the authority to contract with an outside entity to operate the school?	y	n	y	y	n	n	u	y	y	y	y
Can the state require some other major restructuring?	y	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	y

Sanctions for Low-Performing High Schools	NC	ND	OH	OK	OR	PA	RI	SC	SD	TN	TX
Does the state have the authority to place a school on probation?	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	y	y
Does the state have the authority to remove a low-performing school's accreditation?	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	y
Does the state have the authority to reconstitute staff?	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	n	y	y
Does the state have the authority to reopen the school as a public charter school?	n	n	y	n	n	y	y	n	n	y	n
Does the state have the authority to take over the school?	n	n	y	y	n	n	y	y	n	y	y
Does the state have the authority to take over a school district?	y	n	y	y	n	y	y	y	n	y	y
Does the state have the authority to contract with an outside entity to operate the school?	y	n	y	y	y	n	y	y	n	y	n
Can the state require some other major restructuring?	y	y	y	y	n	n	y	n	n	y	y

Sanctions for Low-Performing High Schools	UT	VT	VA	WA	WV	WI	WY		PR	VI	
Does the state have the authority to place a school on probation?	n	n	n	n	n	n	n		n	na	
Does the state have the authority to remove a low-performing school's accreditation?	n	n	y	n	y	n	n		n	na	
Does the state have the authority to reconstitute staff?	n	y	y	n	y	y	y		n	na	
Does the state have the authority to reopen the school as a public charter school?	n	n	n	n	n	n	n		n	na	
Does the state have the authority to take over the school?	n	y	n	n	y	n	n		n	na	
Does the state have the authority to take over a school district?	n	n	n	n	n	y	y		n	na	
Does the state have the authority to contract with an outside entity to operate the school?	n	n	n	n	n	y	y		n	na	
Can the state require some other major restructuring?	n	y	y	n	y	n	n		n	na	

The "Other" Option

The following table reflects how states define the option of "other major restructuring".

State	What does the state mean by "other major restructuring"?
AL	State board can restructure the school board.
AR	After the fifth year of being designated as low-performing, the state may annex the school to another not in school improvement and/or take other such action as deemed necessary by the state department and the state board.
CT	The school can be required to restructure in terms of the grades included or the program offered.
DE	If the school fails to make adequate progress for six years, the district must implement a restructuring plan at the beginning of the school year following the creation of the plan.
FL	The state board may recommend one or more actions: If it is determined the causes of inadequate progress are related to policy or practice, it may provide additional resources, change practices and provide additional assistance; it may implement a plan that satisfactorily resolves the education equity problems in the school; it may contract for services of the school or reorganize the school at the end of the school year under a new school principal who is authorized to hire new staff and implement a plan addressing the inadequate progress; or take other appropriate action to improve the school's performance.
GA	After three consecutive years or more of a school being designated as low-performing, the state board may mandate a monitor, master or management team in the school (paid for by the district); continue the intensive plan that addresses each academic excellence indicator for which the school's performance is unacceptable (submitted to the state board for approval and implementation); or the state board can mandate a complete restructuring of the school's governance arrangement and internal organization of the school.
HI	After four years of not adequately meeting progress, the school must take corrective action in a manner that involves one or more of the following: 1) implementing a new curriculum; 2) appointing an outside expert as advisor; 3) extending the school day or year; or, 4) restructuring the school. After five years of not adequately meeting progress the only option is to restructure.
IL	For a school that remains on academic watch status after a fifth annual calculation, a revised School Improvement Plan must be approved by the school board and the state superintendent. In addition, the school district must develop a school restructuring plan for the school that must be approved by the school board and the state superintendent. If the school remains on academic watch for a sixth year, it must implement their approved school restructuring plan.
IN	If the school remains in the lowest category of school improvement in the fifth year, the local school board is allowed to: 1) merge the school with a nearby school that is in a higher category; 2) assign a special management team to operate all or part of the school; implement state department recommendations; and 4) implement other options, including closing the school or revising the school plan.
IA	If the deficiencies of the low-performing school are not corrected, the state board is to merge the territory of the school district with one or more contiguous school districts at the end of the school year.
KS	The state board may: 1) direct that the local board of education hire one or more designated persons to assist the school in making the changes necessary to improve student performance; 2) recommend to the legislature that it approve a reduction in state funding to the local district by the amount which shall be added to the local property tax imposed by the local board of education; 3) recommend other action as deemed appropriate.
KY	Both principals and teachers at low-performing schools are required to have a professional growth plan. If they fail to respond to the professional growth plan, the state commissioner of education may recommend to the local superintendent that they be dismissed or transferred.
LA	A statewide Recovery School District was created to operate any school which has been low-performing for four consecutive years. Such a school is removed from the jurisdiction of the district, where it is reorganized as needed and operated by the Recovery School District.
MD	The state superintendent may require any other major restructuring of the school's governance arrangement that makes fundamental reform, such as significant changes in the school's staffing and governance to improve academic achievement in the school and that has substantial promise of enabling the school to make adequate yearly progress.

State	What does the state mean by "other major restructuring"?
MA	If the school has failed to demonstrate significant improvement as dictated by the remedial plan it wrote and had the state board approve, the principal is replaced. The new principal has extraordinary powers, which include dismissal of any teacher or other employee assigned to the school without regard to established procedures or collective-bargaining agreements.
MI	The school may be required to align itself with an existing research-based school improvement model or establish an affiliation for providing assistance to the school with a college or university located in the state.
NV	The support team established for the school may take one or more of the following corrective actions: 1) develop and carry out a new curriculum at the school, including the provision of appropriate professional development relating to the new curriculum; 2) decrease the number of employees at the school who carry out managerial duties; or 3) extend the school year or the school day.
NY	If a school fails to meet the performance goals for five consecutive years, then a revised restructuring plan must be developed and approved by the commissioner of education. If it continues failing to meet the performance goals, it must implement the restructuring plan at the beginning of the school year following the creation of the plan.
NC	The state board is required to develop and implement a series of actions for providing assistance and intervention to schools designated as low-performing for at least three out of the last four years. These actions are to be the least intrusive actions that are consistent with the need to improve student achievement at each such school and are to be adapted to the unique characteristics and the effectiveness of other actions developed or implemented to improve student achievement at each school.
ND	North Dakota policy allows for other major restructuring but does not define the details.
OH	If a school fails to make adequate progress for five consecutive school years, its district must develop a plan during the next school year to improve the academic performance of the school. The plan must include the options of turning the operation of the school over to the state department of education and other significant restructuring of the school's governance. If the school continues failing to make progress for a sixth consecutive school year, the plan must be implemented.
OK	The state board must assign a team to provide guidance and assistance to the school site and district until the site is no longer declared to be low-performing or high challenge. Other means of intervention which may include, but are not limited to: 1) special funding; 2) transfer of students; 3) operation of the school by personnel employed by the state department; 4) mandatory annexation of all or part of the local school district; and 5) placing operation of the school with an institution of higher education.
RI	If, after a three year period of support, there has not been improvement in the education of students, then there are to be progressive levels of control by the department of elementary and secondary education over the school and/or district budget and/or program. This control by the department may be exercised in collaboration with the school and the municipality. If further needed, the school is to be reconstituted. Reconstitution responsibility is delegated to the board of regents and may range from restructuring the school's governance, budget, program, personnel, and/or may include decisions regarding the continued operation of the school.
TN	The commissioner of education is required to impose corrective actions on a school in its first year of probation for not meeting annual yearly progress. After two consecutive years on probation, the commissioner is authorized to assume any or all powers of governance of the school or system and recommend to the state board that both the local board of education and the superintendent be removed from office.
TX	Closure of the school.
VT	Policy allows the state commissioner of education to recommend to the state board one or more of the following actions with regard to a low-performing school: 1) continue technical assistance; 2) adjust supervisory union boundaries or responsibilities of the superintendency; 3) assume administrative control only to the extent necessary to correct deficiencies; and 4) close the school and require the school district pay tuition to another public school or an approved independent school.

State	What does the state mean by "other major restructuring"?
VA	The school is subject to actions prescribed by the board of education and affirmed through a memorandum of understanding between the board of education and the local school board. The local school board must submit a corrective action plan to the board of education for its consideration in prescribing actions in the memorandum of understanding. The memorandum of understanding may include, but not be limited to: 1) undergoing an educational service delivery and management review with the content prescribed by the board of education; and 2) employing a turnaround specialist credentialed by the state to address those conditions at the school that may impede education progress and effectiveness and academic success. An alterative to the memorandum of understanding would be the local school board choosing to reconstitute a school and apply for conditional accreditation. The local school board may also choose to combine the school with a higher performing school in the division.
WV	Intervention may include establishing instructional programs; taking such direct action as may be necessary to correct the impairments; declaring the position of principal as vacant and assigning a principal for the school who serves at the will and pleasure of, and under the sole supervision of, the state board.

State Reward Policies

As the focus on improvement in performance heightens, states have found rewards to be an effective mechanism for recognizing successful efforts. Rewards for schools and districts consist of monetary and non-monetary recognition. In some cases, the rewards are granted to the school. In other cases bonuses are provided to staff. Some rewards are based on absolute performance and others on improvement or growth.

Highlights:

- Recognizing schools for increased achievement encourages schools faced with big challenges to stretch. Thirty-nine states currently reward high-performance and one state is developing a recognition program.
- Monetary awards can allow cash-strapped schools the freedom to make desired improvements. However, statewide recognition of hard work also is very important to struggling schools. Sixteen states offer both monetary and non-monetary rewards.
- School-level rewards allow the school to honor the efforts of everyone and promote a collaborative team spirit. Rewards to individual staff recognize individual effort and achievement. Schools are eligible to receive rewards in 33 states, while both schools and staff are eligible to receive rewards in four states.
- Only eight states allow the school reward to be used for staff bonuses.
- Basing rewards on absolute performance provides a real target for schools and teachers. Basing the reward on school improvement allows for recognition of gains in achievement. Ten states use improvement in achievement as the basis for rewards and 11 states base rewards on absolute performance. Eighteen states use both approaches.

Legend:

y = yes	n=no	na=not available	u=unclear
m = monetary	nm=non-monetary	sc=school	st=staff
	si=school improvement	ap=absolute performance	

Rewards

Summary Tables
Fifty States, District of Columbia and U.S. Territories

Rewards for High-Performing High Schools	AL	AK	AZ	AR	CA	CO	CT	DE	DC	FL	GA
Does the state reward high-performing schools?	y	y	n	y	y	y	y	y	n	y	y
Are the school rewards monetary or non-monetary?	m nm	m	na	m nm	m nm	m nm	m nm	nm	na	m	m nm
Are reward recipients school and/or staff?	sc	sc	na	sc st	sc	sc	sc	sc	na	sc st	sc st
Can school rewards be used for staff bonuses?	n	na	n	y	n	y	n	na	na	y	y
Are school rewards based on absolute performance or school improvement?	si	ap si	na	ap si	ap si	ap si	ap	ap	na	ap si	ap si

Rewards for High-Performing High Schools	HI	ID	IL	IN	IA	KS	KY	LA	ME	MD	MA
Does the state reward high-performing schools?	y	y	y	y	n	y	y	y	y	y	y
Are the school rewards monetary or non-monetary?	nm	m nm	nm	m nm	na	nm	m	m	u	m nm	m
Are reward recipients school and/or staff?	sc	sc	sc	sc	na	sc	sc	sc	sc	sc	sc
Can school rewards be used for staff bonuses?	na	n	na	n	na	na	n	u	n	n	n
Are school rewards based on absolute performance or school improvement?	si	ap	ap si	ap	na	ap si	si	si	ap si	si	ap si

Rewards for High-Performing High Schools	MI	MN	MS	MO	MT	NE	NV	NH	NJ	NM	NY
Does the state reward high-performing schools?	n	n	y	y	n	n	y	n	y	y	y
Are the school rewards monetary or non-monetary?	na	na	m nm	m	na	na	nm	na	m nm	m	nm
Are reward recipients school and/or staff?	na	na	sc	sc	na	na	sc	na	sc	sc	sc
Can school rewards be used for staff bonuses?	na	na	n	n	na	na	na	na	n	n	na
Are school rewards based on absolute performance or school improvement?	na	na	ap si	si	na	ma	ap	na	ap	ap si	ap si

Rewards for High-Performing High Schools	NC	ND	OH	OK	OR	PA	RI	SC	SD	TN	TX
Does the state reward high-performing schools?	y	n	y	y	n	y	y	y	y	y	y
Are the school rewards monetary or non-monetary?	m	na	nm	m nm	na	m	nm	m nm	nm	m	m nm
Are reward recipients school and/or staff?	st	na	sc	sc	na	sc	sc	sc	sc	sc	sc
Can school rewards be used for staff bonuses?	y	na	na	n	na	y	na	n	na	y	sc st
Are school rewards based on absolute performance or school improvement?	si	na	ap	si	na	ap si	si	ap si	ap si	ap	y

Rewards for High-Performing High Schools	UT	VT	VA	WA	WV	WI	WY		PR	VI	
Does the state reward high-performing schools?	y	n	y	y	y	n	y		y	na	
Are the school rewards monetary or non-monetary?	nm	na	m nm	nm	nm	na	m nm		m nm	na	
Are reward recipients school and/or staff?	sc	na	sc	st	sc	na	sc		sc	na	
Can school rewards be used for staff bonuses?	na	na	n	na	na	na	n		n	na	
Are school rewards based on absolute performance or school improvement?	ap si	si	na	na	ap si	ap	ap		ap si	na	

StateNotes
State Policymaking

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Education-Related Ballot Questions: 2006

By Kyle Zinth

Updated: December 2006

Introduction

2006 saw voters in 15 states decide a wide variety of education policy issues. Thirteen state elections decided various aspects of school finance, including authorizing bond sales, increasing taxes, requiring state funding of schools and changing the management of the state's public school trust fund. Eight states saw voters decide policies in other areas. These proposals include overturning legislation mandating school consolidation and banning in-state college tuition for undocumented immigrants and affirmative action at state institutions.

Selected Highlights

Finance:
Voters in **Michigan** rejected an education funding guarantee, while voters in **Nevada** approved a measure requiring the legislature to fund public education before any other part of the state budget for two years. All districts in **Alabama** will be required to have at least 10 mills of property tax allocated for public education. Two proposals modeled after the "65% solution" were rejected by voters in **Colorado**. Voters in **Wyoming** voted to create a permanent fund for higher education and equalize school funding in all districts, while voters in **Nebraska** approved a measure to create an early childhood endowment fund.

Other Issues:
Arizonans voted to deny in-state tuition and other education services to undocumented immigrants, and **Michigan** voters approved a measure banning affirmative action. **Nebraska** voters repealed legislation pertaining to school district consolidation. **South Dakota** voters rejected a measure that would have prohibited schools boards from establishing the start of a regular school term prior to the last day of August.

Listed questions include enacted legislation being presented to the public for approval and initiatives placed on the ballot through the petition process. Following the summary table below are brief profiles of each question along with links to text when available. Additions and corrections are welcome.

Summary Table

	Issue	Status
Alabama	Requiring every city and county school system to have at least 10 mills of property taxes allocated for public education.	Approved
	Providing for the election of the Macon County board of education.	Approved
Arizona	Banning in-state tuition for undocumented immigrants	Approved
	Decreasing community college taxing	Approved

	capacity	
	Increasing tobacco tax for education	Approved
California	Constructing and renovating of public libraries	Rejected
	Providing universal preschool	Rejected
	Authorizing the sale of $10.4 billion in bonds for education	Approved
	Authorizing a $50 annual land parcel tax for education	Rejected
Colorado	Requiring districts to spend 65% of funds on classroom instruction (Constitutional amendment)	Rejected
	Requiring districts to spend 65% of funds on classroom instruction (Adopt as statute)	Rejected
Hawaii	Requiring governor to select board of regents candidates from a pool proposed by the board of regents	Approved
Idaho	Increasing state sales tax for education funding	Rejected
	Advisory vote asking voters if the state should keep property tax relief adopted in August 2006	Approved
Louisiana	Authorizing investment of state-funded postsecondary endowments in stocks	Approved
	Defining inapplicability of laws requiring increased expenditures by local boards	Approved
	Granting parish authority to East Baton Rouge parish	Approved
Michigan	Prohibiting affirmative action	Approved
	Guaranteeing educational funding	Rejected
Nebraska	Retaining or repealing district consolidation legislation	Repealed
	Creating an early childhood education endowment fund	Approved
Nevada	Determining election and appointment of board of regents	Rejected
	Requiring state funding of public schools	Approved
North Dakota	Changing management and distribution of common schools trust fund	Approved
Ohio	Authorizing additional gambling in the state, with a portion of proceeds going for higher education scholarships.	Rejected
Rhode Island	Authorizing sale of bonds for construction and renovations	Approved
South Dakota	Prohibiting early school start date	Rejected
Wyoming	Equalizing funding in all districts	Approved
	Creating permanent fund for higher education	Approved

State Profiles

Alabama

Amendment Number Two
If approved, would require every city and county school system in the state to have at least 10 mills of property taxes allocated for public education.
Status: Approved by voters.

Amendment Number Three
If approved, would amend the state constitution to provide for the election of the Macon County board of education from four single-member districts and the county at large, and to provide for staggered six-year terms of office.
Status: Approved by voters.

Arizona

Proposition 300
If approved, only U.S. citizens or legal residents would be eligible:

- To participate in adult education classes offered by the state department of education
- For classification as an in-state student or county resident for community college or state university tuition purposes
- For waivers, grants or any other financial assistance paid in whole or part with state funds
- For child care assistance from the Arizona Department of Economic Security.

State agencies would be required to report statistics regarding the number of people denied participation in the above programs due to citizenship or immigration status. (See also: legislative analysis.)
Status: Approved by voters.

Proposition 101
If approved, would amend the state constitution to remove unused taxing capacity and reset each taxing entity's limit to the actual tax levy of that county, city, town or community college district in 2005. Beginning in 2007, the new levy limit would increase by 2% per year, plus any new construction. (See also: legislative analysis)
Status: Approved by voters.

Proposition 203
If approved, would increase taxes on cigarettes and other tobacco products and allocate the resulting revenue to programs and services provided to preschool children and their families for the purpose of assisting child development by providing education and other support, including parent and family support programs, child care, preschool, health screenings and access to preventive health services. At least 40% of funds would be required to be provided to families with incomes that are less than 100% of the federal poverty level. Also would establish an early childhood development and health board and regional partnership councils for each region of the state.
Status: Approved by voters.

California

Proposition 81
If approved, would provide for a bond issue in an amount not to exceed $600 million to provide for the construction and renovation of public library facilities in order to expand access to reading and literacy programs in the state's public education system and to expand access to public library services for all residents of California.
Status: Rejected by voters.

Proposition 82

If approved, would establish voluntary preschool education for all 4-year olds. The program would be funded by a 1.7% tax on individual income over $400,000 or couples' income over $800,000. All revenue would be required to be spent on the new preschool program.
Status: Rejected by voters.

Proposition 1D
If approved, would authorize $10.4 billion in state general obligation bonds to provide aid to school districts, county superintendents of schools, county boards of education, the California Community Colleges, the University of California and the California State University to construct and modernize education facilities.
Status: Approved by voters.

Proposition 88
If approved, would provide additional public school funding through the use of an annual $50 tax on most parcels of land in the state. Funds must be used for class size reduction, textbooks, school safety, Academic Success facility grants and data system to evaluate educational program effectiveness.
Status: Rejected by voters.

Colorado

Amendment 39
If approved, would amend the state constitution to require districts to spend at least 65% of their operational expenditures on classroom instruction beginning in the 2007-08 school year. Districts spending less than 65% would be required to increase spending on the specified items by two percentage points each year until the threshold is met. Districts would be authorized to request a one-year waiver from the spending requirement. The legislature would be authorized to sanction any school district that failing to comply with the spending requirement.
Status: Rejected by voters.

Referendum J
If approved, would amend state statutes to require districts to spend at least 65% of their operational expenditures on classroom instruction beginning in the 2007-08 school year. Districts spending less than 65% would be required to increase spending on the specified items by two percentage points each year until the threshold is met. Districts would be authorized to request a one-year waiver from the spending requirement. The legislature would be authorized to sanction any school district that failing to comply with the spending requirement. Districts would be required to adopt an annual budget report, in a standard format, for public inspection, and would be allowed to hold elections to exempt them from these requirements.
Status: Rejected by voters.
(Note: Items identified as "classroom expenditures" differ between the two proposals. From: ballot analysis.)

Hawaii

If approved, would require the governor select board of regents candidates from a pool of qualified candidates screened and proposed by a candidate advisory council for the board of regents of the University of Hawaii as provided by law.
Status: Approved by voters.

Idaho

Proposition 1
If approved, would increase state funding for local public schools by either raising the sales tax by 1% or through an alternative source identified by the legislature. Would create the local public schools investment fund to support students in the classroom, improve local schools and require an annual accountability report from local school boards on use of increased revenues.
Status: Rejected by voters.

Advisory Vote
Advisory vote asking voters if the state should keep the property tax relief adopted in August 2006, reducing property taxes by approximately $260 million and protecting funding for public schools by keeping the sales tax at 6%.
Status: Approved by voters.

Louisiana

Ballot # 9
If approved, would amend constitution to provide that no law – unless enacted by two-thirds of the elected members of each house of the legislature – requiring increased expenditures for any purpose will be applicable to a city, parish or other local public school board. Provides exceptions to such a prohibition.
Status: Approved by voters.

Ballot # 10
If approved, would permit up to 35% of state-funded permanently endowed funds of a public or private college or university to be invested in stocks.
Status: Approved by voters.

Ballot # 8
If approved, would grant the Central Community School System in East Baton Rouge parish the same authority granted parishes, including the purposes of certain funding including funds for school books and instructional materials and the raising of certain local revenues for the support of elementary and secondary schools.
Status: Approved by voters.

Michigan

Michigan Civil Rights Initiative
If approved, would prohibit the University of Michigan, other state universities, the state and all other state entities from discriminating against or granting preferential treatment based on race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin.
Status: Approved by voters.

Educational Funding Guarantee
If approved, would require the state to provide annual funding increases equal to the rate of inflation for public schools, intermediate school districts, community colleges and higher education. Would require the state to fund any deficiencies in the school aid fund from the general fund. Relates to base funding for school districts with declining enrollment. Reduces and caps retirement fund contributions.
Status: Rejected by voters.

Nebraska

School Consolidation Referendum
Gives voters the choice of repealing or retaining a 2005 bill (LB 126) passed by the legislature requiring the assimilation of Class I school districts (those operating elementary schools only) into K-12 school districts.
Status: Repealed by voters.

Amendment 5
If approved, would amend state constitution to create an early childhood education endowment fund and allocate $40 million of perpetual school funds to the endowment. The $40 million would be subject to reversion to the common schools if the annual income from $20 million of private funds is not committed to the endowment fund by July 1, 2011.
Status: Approved by voters.

Nevada

Assembly Joint Resolution #11
If approved, would amend the state constitution to provide for the election of certain members of the board of regents and the gubernatorial appointment of certain members. Specifies the number and terms of the members.
Status: Rejected by voters.

Ballot Question # 1
If approved, would amend the state constitution to require the legislature to fund the operation of the public schools for K-12th grades before any other part of the state budget for the next two years.
Status: Approved by voters.

North Dakota

HR 3037
If approved, would amend the state constitution regarding distributions from and management of the common schools trust fund and the trust funds of other educational or charitable institutions. The measure would require that the permanent trust funds be managed to preserve their purchasing power, to provide stable distributions to fund beneficiaries and to benefit fund beneficiaries. The measure changes trust fund distributions from interest and income earned by a fund to distributions based on a fund's average value; requires that all revenue produced by a trust fund be deposited in the fund and provides for paying the costs of administration.
Status: Approved by voters.

Ohio

State Issue 3
If approved, would amend state constitution to permit up to 31,500 slot machines at seven horse racing tracks and at two Cleveland non-track locations. It would also allow expanded gaming in the four Cuyahoga County locations, pending approval of county voters. Thirty percent of revenues would go to the Ohio board of regents for college scholarships and grants to eligible students and administration of the program.
Status: Rejected by voters.

Rhode Island

Question 4
If approved, would allow the state to issue general obligation bonds, refunding bonds and temporary notes up to $65 million for the construction of a new college of pharmacy building at the University of Rhode Island and $7.7 million for renovations to the former Department of Children, Youth and Families facilities at Rhode Island College.
Status: Approved by voters.

South Dakota

Measure 3
If approved, would amend state law to prohibit local school boards from establishing the start of a regular school term prior to the last day of August.
Status: Rejected by voters.

Wyoming

Amendment B
The state's Supreme Court has determined that school funding must be equalized among all school districts. If approved, would repeal the current limitation on the amount of property tax revenues that may

be redistributed by the state through the school foundation program account from school districts with greater property tax revenues to other school districts in the state.
Status: Approved by voters.

Amendment C
If approved, would amend state constitution to authorize the establishment of a permanent fund for higher education and the investment and use of earnings from such funds. The permanent funds would be created for two purposes: (1) higher education scholarships and (2) improving the quality of higher education.
Status: Approved by voters.

Sources

- ECS State Policy Database: http://www.ecs.org/ecs/ecscat.nsf/WebTopicView?OpenView&count=300&RestrictToCategory=State--Ballot+Initiatives
- Project Vote Smart: http://www.vote-smart.org/index.htm
- State Secretary of State Web sites.

Kyle Zinth, researcher in the ECS Information Clearinghouse, compiled this report. Email: kzinth@ecs.org

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

Ahead of the Curve

Policy Alert

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 801 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

On A Razor's Edge

The National Economy and School Budgets

By Michael Griffith

Spring 2008

Bad economic news is coming in waves these days — falling home prices, increasing loan defaults, sinking consumer confidence and rising unemployment rates have all made headlines. While news about the state of our nation's economy can be disheartening, it is important to remember that a national economic slowdown does not usually translate into immediate budget cuts for school districts. There is a progression from a national economic slowdown to reductions in school budgets, the stages of which can be identified as follows *(Click on the titles for information about each topic)*:

National Economy
↓
State Economies
↓
State Tax Revenue
↓
State Budgets
↓
State Education Funding
↓
School District Budgets

Between each of these stages exists a lag time — this lag time varies depending on a number of factors. After the events of 9/11, it was only a matter of weeks before the national economy was impacted and school district budgets were cut. However, in some cases, it has taken months or even years for a national economic slowdown to impact school budgets.

States Are Not Impacted in the Same Way

Each economic slowdown impacts different states in different ways. The current slowdown in the economy is less severe on those states that rely on mineral extraction taxes (i.e. taxes on oil, natural gas and coal) or those states with a large agricultural base. In addition, those states that did not receive a "boom" in the housing market of the late 1990s and in the early part of this decade are not being impacted as greatly by the current "bust" in the market. However, those states that rely on businesses outside of mineral extraction or agriculture — especially those who rely on manufacturing — are already experiencing the pinch of the economic downturn.

What Options Exist For Policymakers

There are steps that policymakers can take to help diminish the impact of economic downturns on school budgets — these include proactive policies that can be implemented prior to bad economic times and reactive policies that can be used after a downturn.

Funding Changes that May Help Stave-off School Funding Cuts:

- *Conduct a review of state and district education budgets looking for efficiencies*.
  The state of New Jersey just completed a review of education spending which they hope to use to increase the efficiency of education spending in their state.

- *Create or expand a "Rainy Day" fund for education*.
  By placing additional revenue in Rainy Day funds in good years, states can create a financial cushion for bad years. A recent report from the Governor's "Committee on Education Excellence" in California recommended this change in their state.

- *Diversify the taxes that are used to pay for the state's share of education*.
  This option may not always be possible for fiscal, political or legal reasons, but if a state is able to move away from relying on a single funding source for education, (i.e. sales, income or "sin" taxes) it could create a hedge against bad economic times.

School Funding Changes that Can Improve Quality and Reduce Costs

- *Promote the idea of school district purchasing cooperatives.*
  A study conducted on behalf of the Leadership for Education Achievement in Delaware Committee found that if school districts pooled their purchasing power, they could reduce their costs by between 8% and 14%.

- *Encourage districts to work together to educate high-need special education students.*
  Studies have found that if districts work together to educate certain high-need special education students, they can both improve the quality of education and reduce costs.

- *Streamline the states funding system with an eye toward efficiency.*
  Starting in the 2007-08 school year, the state of New York consolidated approximately 30 smaller funding programs into a new foundation aid formula. This change was made with the hope that the new streamlined funding system would help reduce administrative costs while making the system easier for districts to comprehend.

You can find additional information about state school funding policies on the ECS School Finance web page or by contacting Michael Griffith, ECS school finance analyst, *at mgriffith@ecs.org*

Equipping Education Leaders, Advancing Ideas

Policy Brief

At-Risk

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 810 • Denver, CO 80203-3442 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Beyond the GED: State Strategies to Help Former Dropouts Earn a High School Diploma

By Jennifer Dounay

August 2008

Bored in his high school classes, "Jeffrey" had mentally checked out of high school long before he stopped going to class at age 15. After four years working at low-wage jobs and unable to make ends meet, he realized he wanted to earn a high school diploma and go to college. But at 19, Jeffrey would feel awkward sitting in high school classes, surrounded by kids much younger than him. And why would he want to go back to his local high school, where none of the teachers had seemed to care about him, and courses seemed completely unrelated to the real world? Not to mention the fact that his work schedule would make it impossible to attend a full schedule of classes during the regular school day. Besides, quitting his job was not an option. Jeffrey felt stuck.

Jeffrey is not alone. Seventy-four percent of the high school dropouts age 16-25 surveyed for a 2006 report said that, if they could do it all over again, they would have stayed in school. Seventy-six percent of the survey respondents said that if they could, they would definitely or probably enroll in a high school program for people their age. The authors add, "At the time of their decision to leave high school, fifty-three percent [of the dropouts in the survey] had planned to go back and graduate. Since that time, however, only 11 percent have actually gone back and graduated."[1]

And the situation is particularly serious, considering the low graduation rates in many states and communities, combined with the educational, economic and employment challenges that high school dropouts face. As Adria Steinberg and Cheryl Almeida point out in a 2004 report:

> Since the 1970s, wages of high school dropouts have fallen further and further behind those of high school graduates and, particularly, those with college credentials. Young people who exit the educational pipeline in high school are much less likely than their peers to attain valuable postsecondary credentials, even if they eventually obtain a GED. While many more GED recipients (30 percent) than dropouts (8 percent) obtain some postsecondary credits, less than 2 percent of GED holders compared to 36 percent of high school graduates complete four or more years of postsecondary education. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that 60 percent of jobs created between now and 2010 will require at least some postsecondary education. In the emerging economy, a high school dropout or a young person who earns a GED but no further postsecondary credential has extremely few opportunities for a family-supporting career.[2]

Clearly, options are needed to help young adults earn a high school diploma.

While many programs to help young dropouts earn a high school diploma are local initiatives launched by forward-thinking districts and community-based organizations, few states have launched larger-scale efforts to help young people reenter the education system. This policy brief provides information on various state policy components that can facilitate former dropouts' ability to earn a high school diploma:

- Increasing the upper statutory age
- Offering flexible means to accelerate learning and demonstrate course competencies

- Providing flexible (not less rigorous) credit recovery options
- Offering flexibility in course scheduling and courseloads
- Making clear connections to postsecondary education and/or the workforce
- Communicating the availability of options for dropouts to earn a high school diploma.

This policy brief also addresses finance elements state policymakers must consider when developing new education options.

Increasing the upper statutory age

Why it's important: State education funding is generally tied to student age. Therefore, districts serving students who are older than the state-set upper statutory age are not eligible to receive state funds for those students. This creates a disincentive for districts and schools to serve older students, particularly during tight fiscal situations. Recognizing this fact, 31 states set the upper statutory age at 21, and nine states set it at 20.[3]

Highlights: Texas legislation enacted in 2007 authorizes districts to admit resident students up to age 26 who wish to earn a high school diploma. A student older than 21 who has not attended school in the last three years must have separate classrooms from high school students age 18 and younger.[4]

Offering flexible means to accelerate learning and demonstrate course competencies

Why it's important: Many dropouts were poorly served by the traditional textbook-and-blackboard class structure. They are also more likely to have work or parenting obligations that prevent them from attending class on a regular schedule. Offering accelerated learning or the ability to demonstrate course competency provides students with an alternative route to gaining enough credits to earn a high school diploma.

Highlights: Some states have met this need by establishing state policies that offer returning dropouts the opportunity to complete required credits by demonstrating proficiency in required knowledge and skills.

Texas legislation passed in 2007 authorizes students with attendance rates between 75% and 90% to earn course credit if the student completes a plan (approved by the principal) that provides for the student to meet the class instructional requirements.[5] Furthermore, an increasing number of states allow students to circumvent seat-time course requirements by demonstrating proficiency in the course content. (For more details, see the "Proficiency-based credit" section of the ECS graduation requirements database.)

While some states' proficiency-based credit options were adopted long ago to accommodate gifted students, more recent state policies make clear that such options must be made available to at-risk or returning dropout students. To better serve at-risk students and returning dropouts, **Louisiana** repealed an earlier provision in 2007 that barred students from taking a proficiency test to earn credit for a course they had previously failed.[6]

Ohio students entering grade 9 in the 2010-2011 school year will be required to complete the rigorous Ohio core curriculum. Students age 16-21 may enroll in a "dropout prevention and recovery program" to allow students to complete a competency-based instructional program instead of the Ohio core curriculum. Eligible students must be "at least one grade level behind their cohort age groups or experience crises that significantly interfere with their academic progress such that they are prevented from continuing their traditional programs." Programs must indicate how the state content standards will be taught and assessed (and these means must be approved by the state department of education). Participating students must still pass the Ohio graduation tests.[7]

Providing flexible (not less rigorous) credit recovery options

Why it's important: Returning dropouts are best served when they can use flexible, alternative means to acquire knowledge and skills they struggled with in the traditional classroom setting.

Highlights: Emerging state approaches include strategies such as are developing options to allow returning dropouts to catch up on just the skills and knowledge they lack, or providing online and other methods that allow for flexible scheduling, but still require demonstration of mastery of state-level standards.

An **Alabama** state board rule authorizes districts to develop credit recovery programs to provide students with opportunities to master concepts and skills in one or more failed courses. The rule requires course content for credit recovery courses to be composed of standards in which students proved deficient rather than all standards of the original course, and allows these courses to be provided via computer software, online instruction, or teacher-directed instruction. However, this does not set a lower standard for earning graduation credit — the curriculum of credit recovery courses must align with the state board content standards in which students are deficient.[8]

Louisiana specifies that any credit recovery course districts choose to offer must be "self-paced and competency-based," and that districts cannot impose attendance requirements on participating students in such courses as long as the attendance requirement was met when the student first failed the course. Like Alabama, Louisiana requires credit recovery courses to be aligned with the state's content standards and grade-level expectations. Students in a credit recovery course may earn Carnegie units either by (1) completing the course requirements for a computer-based credit recovery program approved by the state department of education, or (2) passing a department-approved exam, which may be a state-approved end-of-course exam or a locally-developed final exam approved by the state department of education.[9]

One of the stated purposes of the **Kentucky**, **North Carolina** and **South Carolina** virtual high school programs is to offer credit recovery options.[10]

Caveat: Time should be the variable (less time as well as more). Standards and high expectations should be the same for all students, regardless of whether they're following an alternative route or traditional path to high school graduation.

Offering flexibility in course scheduling and courseloads

Why it's important: The regular 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. school day can make returning to school a challenge for returning dropouts who have jobs or young children. Therefore, offering flexible course scheduling and course loads provides non-traditional students more opportunities to earn a high school diploma.

Highlights: State approaches include such strategies as allowing students to take courses at unconventional hours — during evenings, weekends, summers, and vacation sessions — and allowing for attendance either in brick-and-mortar classrooms or online.

Texas legislation allows a district to apply to the state to offer a flexible school day program for students who have dropped out of high school. An approved district may offer flexibility in the number of hours in the school day or in the number of days in the school week, or may allow students to enroll in less or more than a full course load. In calculating average daily attendance for students participating in a flexible school day program, the state department of education must "allow accumulations of hours of instruction for students whose schedule would not otherwise allow full state funding." Funding must be prorated based on hours and/or days of instruction, including time spent in class during the summer or vacation session.[11]

Twenty-eight states have established statewide virtual high schools, which in most cases allow students to take courses outside the regular school day and school year. In 27 states, courses must be aligned with state standards.[12]

Making clear connections to postsecondary education and/or the workforce

Why it's important: Going to college and/or improving one's lot in the workforce can be prime motivators for dropouts to return to school. Some programs provide explicit guidance and support. Those offering postsecondary credit make clear that students are working toward a credential that matters. Those programs that provide training in technical skills in an area of student interest offer opportunities for graduates to apply for living-wage jobs with career potential. Workforce training additionally provides the "real-world" learning environments in which many at-risk students thrive. Dual enrollment programs situated on postsecondary campuses spare older returning students the embarrassment of taking courses on a high school campus and can be good exposure for students who are the first in their family to attend college.

Highlights: Some states have developed options allowing returning dropouts to earn a high school diploma on a postsecondary campus. In some cases, students may earn high school as well as college credit.

Indiana's Fast Track to College program offers young people the opportunity to earn a high school diploma while getting a leg up on earning a postsecondary degree. Programs at Ivy Tech Community College (which has campuses across the state) and Vincennes University (a multi-campus two-year public university that also awards baccalaureate degrees in seven areas) may allow students to complete credits toward an associate's degree or certification program. Programs also may be established at a public colleges and universities and offer credit toward a four-year degree. At all locations, eligible students must be either at least 19 years old and not enrolled in high school, or 17 years old and have permission from the high school most recently attended.

To complete diploma requirements, students must (1) pass the state exit exam, an approved exit exam equivalent, the GED exam or an exam that demonstrates the student is ready for college-level coursework (i.e., COMPASS, SAT, ACT); and (2) complete high school and postsecondary course requirements. The postsecondary institution awards the high school diploma, which notes that the recipient earned the diploma at the institution.

All postsecondary institutions offering Fast Track must report to the state's P-16 coordinating entity, the Education Roundtable, the number of program participants and diplomas granted.[13] However, the fact that many students 19 years old and older must bear the financial burden for tuition, fees, books, and other costs has proven an obstacle to greater Fast Track participation among adults.[14]

While not explicitly geared to serving returning dropouts, **Oregon** legislation on alternative education programs has led to the development of high-quality programs that allow students to earn their diploma, (along with postsecondary credits) on postsecondary campuses. Districts may run their own programs or contract with approved private alternative education providers. All programs must undergo evaluation at least annually. Evaluations of private alternative education programs must review whether programs are providing the opportunity for students "to make progress toward achieving state academic content and performance standards." [15]

Through this legislation, Portland Community College developed the Gateway to College program serving 16- to 20-year-old dropouts. Gateway to College is now available in 12 states. **Pennsylvania** statute makes clear that for purposes of reimbursing districts and postsecondary institutions, "Gateway to College" programs are considered concurrent enrollment programs.[16]

A **Louisiana** pilot program focuses on offering students age 16-21 access to technical training. Legislation enacted in 2006 establishes a pilot encouraging high schools and community or technical colleges to forge partnerships allowing students to earn Carnegie units toward graduation and articulated postsecondary technical college credit. By the 2010-2011 school year "or as soon as funding is made available," the state aims to make the program available to any eligible student.[17] The only drawback is that legislation specifies that eligible students (even

those over age 18) must be enrolled in a public high school. It is unlikely that dropouts will be eager to re-enroll in a traditional high school to access the program.

Regardless of program location, returning dropouts may need help setting a plan for future education and career goals. School staff are responsible for developing individual career plans for students in the **Ohio** dropout prevention and recovery program. These plans must specify that a student will ultimately enroll in a two-year postsecondary program, earn a business and industry credential, or enter an apprenticeship. The program must provide counseling and support based on the plan during the remainder of the student's high school experience.[18]

Getting the word out

Why it's important: In policy, it isn't always true that "If you build it, they will come." State policymakers should think about effective marketing and communications so that young people eligible for participation in dropout recovery programs are aware of such opportunities and the benefits of program completion.

Highlights: Some states, for example, require districts to notify students of the availability of high school programs for potential or returning dropouts.

When a student's attendance pattern is so erratic that the student is not benefiting from the educational program, **Oregon** districts are required to notify students and parents of the availability of alternative education programs. The notification must specify a program recommended for the student based on student's learning styles, and needs and procedures for enrolling the student in that program. Districts must also ensure that parents speaking a language other than English receive the notification in a language they can understand.[19]

Thinking differently about schools = thinking differently about funding

Why it's important: New education programs, especially those run outside of traditional school districts, may require adjustments in the way that states distribute their funding. In certain cases, the funding system may require only a tweak, while in others, a major revision in funding might be necessary. It is important for state policymakers to make sure that before any new education program is implemented, appropriate changes to the state funding system have been made.

Highlights: School finance policies in some states take into account the flexible scheduling and structure of programs serving returning dropouts.

Contractors who provide approved alternative education programs in **Oregon** receive either the full cost of educating a student or 80% of the school district's average cost of educating a student, whichever is less. Administrative rule allows funding to support activities such as tutorials, small and large group instruction, personal growth and development instruction, cooperative work experience, supervised work experience and other activities provided by any accredited institutions.[20]

Jennifer Dounay, project manager for ECS' High School Policy Center, can be reached at 303.299.3689 or jdounay@ecs.org

[1] John M. Bridgeland, John J. DiIulio, Jr., Karen Burke Morison, *The Silent Epidemic: Perspectives of High School Dropouts.* [report online] (Washington, D.C.: Civic Enterprises, LLC, 2006, accessed 6 August 2008); available from Civic Enterprises: http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/thesilentepidemic3-06final.pdf; Internet.
[2] Adria Steinberg and Cheryl Almeida, *The Dropout Crisis: Promising Approaches in Prevention and Recovery.* [report online] (Boston: Jobs for the Future, 2004, accessed 8 August 2008); available from JFF: http://www.jff.org/Documents/dropoutcrisis.pdf; Internet.
[3] ECS database, "Student Accountability Initiatives: Upper Statutory Age," last updated July 30, 2007, accessed 27 August 2008: http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=1635
[4] TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 25.001
[5] TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 25.092
[6] LA. ADMIN. CODE tit. 28, § 2323
[7] OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3313.603(F)
[8] ALA. ADMIN. CODE R. 2903-1-.02
[9] LA. ADMIN. CODE tit. 28, § 2324
[10] ECS database, "Virtual High Schools: Does the Virtual High School Have a Specific Focus?," last updated December 3, 2007; accessed 20 August 2008: http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=1384
[11] TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 29.0822
[12] ECS database, "Virtual High Schools," last updated December 3, 2007; accessed 20 August 2008: http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=1781
[13] IND. CODE ANN. § 21-43-6-1 through -6, 21-43-7-1 through -6, 21-43-8-1 through -6
[14] Cyndi Stout, Ivy Tech Community College – Central Indiana, personal communication
[15] OR. REV. STAT. § 336.615 through 336.675
[16] 24 PA. CONS. STAT. § 16-1602-B
[17] LA REV. STAT. ANN. § 17:187.1 through 187.5
[18] OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3313.603(F)
[19] OR. REV. STAT. § 336.645; OR. ADMIN. R. 581-021-0071
[20] OR. REV. STAT. § 336.635; OR. ADMIN. R. 581-023-0008

Policy Brief

High School

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 810 • Denver, CO 80203-3442 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Strengthening Parents' Ability to Provide the Guidance and Support That Matter Most in High School

By Tim Taylor and Jennifer Dounay

August 2008

Introduction

A convincing body of evidence confirms what common sense suggests: The higher the expectations of parents, the steadier their guidance and support, and the greater their sense of partnership with teachers and other staff, the better their child's chances of academic success.

Perhaps at no stage of schooling is parental involvement more vital than in the upper grades. Regardless of a family's socioeconomic status or background, young people with involved parents are more likely to attend school regularly, earn a high school diploma and continue to postsecondary education.[1] But survey findings make clear that too few parents understand — let alone provide — the kind of involvement and support that matter most during students' high school years. And relatively few state policies give schools and districts guidance on how to meaningfully involve parents of secondary-level students in their child's education.

This policy brief reviews:

- Research on the types of parental involvement that positively impact high school students
- State and local policies and practices that reflect and reinforce a commitment to parental involvement
- The parental involvement component of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.

Parent involvement matters — And parents of teens need to know that

Research suggests that regardless of a family's educational, racial or socioeconomic background, students whose parents are actively engaged in their education — from the early grades on, both at home and at school — are more likely to reap numerous academic and social benefits. Yet a 2002 synthesis of research on "the influence of family and community involvement on student academic achievement and other outcomes" found that not all forms of parental involvement at the high school level are equally effective. During the high school years, the most effective types of parental involvement are those that help steer teens' academic decisions.[2] And research suggests that the greatest achievement outcomes are realized when parents provide their high school-aged children with the following types of guidance:

- Communicating and upholding high expectations
- Providing structure, insisting on responsibility, and paying close attention to students' progress
- Helping young people identify, explore and understand the requirements of post-high school education, training and employment options
- Assisting their child with homework, course selection, test preparation, and financial aid applications.[3]

Thus it is troubling that a majority of American parents see themselves as less obliged — and/or no longer able — to provide academic guidance and support once their children reach high school. In a 1998 nationwide survey of parents and teachers by Public Agenda, only 30% of parents agreed with the

statement that “less parental involvement in later grades means a student’s academic work will suffer,” while 63% of parents responded that less parental involvement in a child’s education in the upper grades is essentially positive: “a sign the student is learning to be independent and to manage school on their [sic] own.”[4] Yet in a 2006 survey by Civic Enterprises, LLC, many young high school dropouts indicated their parents had limited communication from or proactive involvement with their school until they were on the verge of leaving school; seven out of 10 supported more parental involvement.[5] These and other findings underscore the need for raising public awareness that supporting students’ academic and social development during the high school years is a collaborative enterprise.

Among the defining features of high-performing schools is that parent involvement is viewed not as an impediment or an add-on, but rather as a vital force for change and improvement. In a review of several dozen studies on family/school/community connections over the past 20 years, researchers Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Mapp found that:

> When schools engage families in ways that are linked to improving learning, students make greater gains. When schools build partnerships with families that respond to their concerns and honor their contributions, they are successful in sustaining connections that are aimed at improving student achievement. And when families and communities organize to hold poorly performing schools accountable, studies suggest that school districts make positive changes in policy, practice and resources.[6]

Policies and practices that reflect and reinforce a commitment to parent involvement

Several state policy levers and local practices hold the potential not only to increase parental involvement at the high school level, but also to improve the quality of that involvement. These policies seek to:

- Develop and implement a formal parental involvement policy
- Reach out to and communicate with parents on academic expectations
- Recognize and accommodate parents’ needs
- Develop the capacity of school staff to engage and interact with parents
- Develop parents’ capacity to interact and engage with fellow parents, school staff and community members
- Develop policy benchmarks and evaluate the impact of parental involvement.

Developing and implementing a formal parent involvement policy

Parents of high school students may be less engaged in their children’s learning simply because they don’t know what activities provide meaningful supports for their adolescent. As state and local policymakers consider parental involvement policies, such elements should be drafted, implemented and regularly reviewed in partnership with parents. These policies should clearly delineate the respective roles and responsibilities of parents and school staff and specify the actions they will take together to improve students’ achievement and readiness for postsecondary education and employment.

Ohio is one of 17 states that requires all districts, local boards or schools to implement a parental involvement policy.[7] State statute directs all districts to develop parental involvement policies to support “consistent and effective communication” between schools and families, and to “provide the opportunity for parents … to be actively involved in their” child’s education. Parents must be informed of the importance of their involvement in their children’s educational success.[8]

Legislation directs the **South Carolina** state superintendent of education to “promote parental involvement as a priority for all levels from pre-K through grade 12, with particular emphasis at the middle and high school levels where parental involvement is currently least visible[.]”[9] The state’s parental involvement policy is also unique in that districts must communicate to all parents what is expected of them:

- Modeling desirable behavior, and stimulating thought and curiosity
- Communicating and upholding high expectations for academic achievement

- Monitoring and checking homework, and ensuring school attendance and punctuality
- Attending parent-teacher conferences and, when possible, other school events
- Building partnerships with teachers to promote successful school experiences.[10]

Reaching out to and communicating with parents on academic expectations

Research suggests that one of the most vital ways parents can be involved during the high school years is by setting high academic expectations of their children and supporting them in achieving those expectations.

Ohio statute requires all local boards of education to inform parents about techniques, strategies and skills to use at home to enhance their children's academic success, and how and when to assist their children in classroom learning activities.[11]

Florida law directs the department of education to develop guidelines for all districts to use in developing a parent guide that is disseminated to all parents. The aim of the parent guide is to inform parents of what they need to know about their child's educational progress and how they can help their child to succeed in school. Required elements of the guide are: information on their child's progress toward meeting state and local "expectations for academic proficiency," and "[o]pportunities for parents to learn about rigorous academic programs that may be available for their child, such as honors programs, dual enrollment, advanced placement, International Baccalaureate, … Florida Virtual High School courses, and accelerated access to postsecondary education."[12] Legislation specifies that the Florida Partnership for Minority and Underrepresented Student Achievement must work with districts to provide parents with information on Advanced Placement (AP) and other advanced courses, on the value of these courses in preparing for college-level curricula and postsecondary admissions and financial aid opportunities, and on procedures students must follow to sign up for such courses.[13]

Every Florida district must also create and disseminate a checklist of what parents can do to strengthen their involvement in their child's educational progress. The checklist must be distributed annually to all parents and must "focus on academics, especially reading, high expectations for students, citizenship, and communication."[14]

Research indicates students are more likely to seek information about college preparation from their parents than from teachers or counselors, and yet many parents do not know where to turn for this information. Parental outreach efforts at the high school level should seek to address this information gap. A growing number of states require all high school students, in conjunction with a parent and school staff member, to develop and annually update a personal graduation plan that sets out the courses a student will take each year of high school to be prepared for the student's stated postsecondary or career goals. A small but growing number of states have gone one step further, adopting policies to provide all parents of high school students with information on their student's progress toward completion of graduation requirements, the college admissions requirements in their state, current tuition costs at public postsecondary institutions, financial aid options and procedures for filling out financial aid applications. The ECS policy brief "Involving Families in High School and College Expectations" offers greater detail on these state efforts.[15]

Recognizing and accommodating parents' needs

Nearly half of the recent dropouts in the 2006 survey by Civic Enterprises indicated that their parents' work schedules prevented them from keeping up with what was happening in their child's school.[16] State policy should encourage schools to offer as much flexibility as possible in addressing parents' needs and concerns regarding involvement. Schools should be urged to create options for parents who work fulltime, or for whom transportation or childcare are a problem. Among the means of providing this flexibility:

- **Scheduling parent/staff meetings**. Teachers and principals should be willing to "[hold] meetings and [have] office hours at convenient times for parents," including mornings, lunchtime, evenings and weekends, or even to schedule home visits, when necessary.[17]
- **Incorporating parent resource centers and/or parent involvement advocates**. A school or district can select "parent involvement advocates" and/or create and staff a "parent resource center" that promotes and coordinates all parent involvement activities, support and information.

Arkansas, Louisiana and **South Carolina** utilize this approach as part of their overall involvement policies.

- **Coordinating bus or carpool service** to and from school parent involvement activities.
- **Providing childcare** during school parent involvement activities.
- Holding meetings and other activities at **locations that are easier for all parents to get to**, such as a community center.

Addressing such barriers demonstrates school commitment to maximizing parent participation, which can help overcome some parents' reluctance to be involved.

Research suggests that Asian, Latino and African American parents of high school students are as active in their children's education as White parents, but in somewhat different ways.[18] Thus it is important that school-based parental involvement programs be sensitive to these differences. **South Carolina**'s parental involvement and best practices training programs offer one example: by statute, programs must include "practices that are responsive to racial, ethnic, and socio-economic diversity[.]"[19]

For schools serving large populations of students and parents whose first language is not English, translation of outreach materials is critical, as is the availability of language interpreter services for school/teacher meetings and forums. If 15% or more of students in a public school speak a single native language other than English, **California** requires all communications to parents by the school or district to be in both English and the native language, and provides that family responses may be either in English or the native language. To evaluate the quality and effectiveness of these efforts, the state department of education must "determine the types of documents and languages a school district translates to a primary language other than English, the availability of these documents to parents or guardians who speak a primary language other than English and the gaps in translations of these documents."[20]

Developing the capacity of school staff to engage and interact with parents

Preservice training and professional development that heighten teachers' awareness of the positive impact of parental involvement in the upper grades, and that improve the ability of teachers and other staff to work with parents, are also critical. Yet a 1997 Harvard survey found that many state teacher certification requirements "did not mention working with parents or families" and that certification requirements that did include preparation on family involvement often applied only to candidates for elementary-level certification.[21] Consequently, many secondary-level teachers lack the preparation, strategies and experiences to successfully engage parents, particularly those from diverse cultural backgrounds.

A 2004 Harvard analysis advises, "[P]reservice teachers should have a comprehensive picture of the many benefits of … broadly defined parent involvement, as well as be aware of key areas that can make them more effective when working with students and their families." Such training and professional development can have strong ripple effects, especially at the high school level, where parental involvement is not a presumed component of schooling. As the Harvard analysis suggests, "[R]equired courses [in teacher preparation programs] about adolescent development should debunk long-standing myths and inform prospective middle and high school teachers of the power that parent involvement has to positively affect achievement. Empowered teachers will empower parents to be involved and expect more from their adolescents. Empowered parents can inspire their teens to do better at school and in life."[22]

Arkansas and **South Carolina** mandate parental involvement training for teachers, administrators and school staff. Arkansas requires teacher preparation programs to incorporate information on "the importance of parental involvement and how to successfully encourage parents to be partners in their child's education."[23] Inservice teachers must complete at least two hours of professional development "designed to enhance understanding of effective parental involvement strategies," while administrators must complete at least three hours of professional development on "effective parent involvement strategies" and "[t]he importance of administrative leadership in setting expectations and creating a climate conducive to parental participation."[24] South Carolina, meanwhile, directs the state board of education to establish criteria for staff training on research-based school efforts demonstrated to increase parental involvement.[25] Teacher and principal preparation programs in the state must incorporate parent

involvement training that addresses key issues such as establishing and maintaining parent-friendly school settings, raising awareness of community resources that strengthen families and help students succeed, and other topics appropriate for fostering parent/teacher relationships.[26]

Developing parents' capacity to engage and interact with fellow parents, school staff and community members

The flip side to developing teacher capacity is developing parents' leadership capacity. Recognizing the influence strong parent leaders can have on not only improving schools and increasing student achievement, but also getting other parents more involved, **Kentucky** has focused on developing parent leaders in schools. The Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership, founded in 1997 by the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, offers a variety of programs aimed at bringing together parents, teachers, community members and school administrators for training, information and experiences that help them work as partners to raise student achievement. More than 1,300 parents across the state have participated in institute-sponsored programs and activities designed to strengthen their leadership skills and make them "effective advocates for improved education and higher achievement for all students."

Maryland has likewise established a Parent Leadership Institute. Since 2003, more than 100 parents from across the state have completed the federally funded institute's six-day program, which focuses on strengthening leadership skills and broadening parents' understanding of Maryland's standards-based assessment system and NCLB requirements.

Any parent of a public school student in the state is eligible to apply for the program. The application process is competitive, with approximately 20 parents chosen to participate free of charge in each session. Targeted for selection are parents of students who attend Title I schools and schools in need of improvement.

Developing policy benchmarks and evaluating impact

Ideally, a parental involvement policy also should include (1) guidelines for measuring whether it is working and (2) a regular evaluation component. The evaluation should review both the content and effectiveness of the policy, including an assessment of how well it is contributing to improving academic quality, and barriers to increased involvement and ways to address them, especially for parents who are economically or educationally disadvantaged. A policy should also address the question, "Evaluation against what?" to help ensure that policy goals have been clearly stated.

Louisiana directs the state board of education to annually evaluate the effectiveness of parent involvement policies through quarterly meetings convened by the state superintendent of education, including a review of problems in increasing the participation and involvement of parents in the learning of their children and in the life of the schools. From such meetings, the board must generate suggestions and recommendations.[27]

The Parental Involvement Component of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act

The NCLB Act requires schools receiving Title I funds to have a formal parent involvement policy that is developed, implemented and regularly reviewed and updated in partnership with parents. The law also mandates that schools identify and overcome barriers to involvement, and that districts help schools build the capacity to effectively implement the policy.

Many observers contend the full potential of this NCLB requirement has yet to be realized, saying this is primarily due to many schools' unwillingness to "make it an educational priority," coupled with a lack of enforcement. In addition, since relatively few high schools receive Title I funds, far more elementary than secondary schools are required to develop the parent involvement policies mandated by NCLB.

The Prichard Committee's Center for Parent Leadership recommends that for state policymakers, it is important to monitor how districts carry out the Title I parent involvement requirements and to ensure that

districts “have strong, up-to-date parent involvement policies” that parents had a role in developing and approving. The center additionally suggests that states can provide resources, training and technical assistance to schools and districts to support the policies, such as through professional development, multicultural resources and mini-grant programs.[28]

Conclusion

While research undeniably demonstrates the positive impact of parental involvement at the high school level, far too many parents of teens feel their involvement is either unnecessary or beyond their capacity to provide. Well-considered state policy supports can demonstrate to all parents the need for their continued support in the upper grades, and can ensure they receive the information they require to offer their child meaningful and effective assistance.

Timothy Taylor is a former assistant policy analyst in ECS' High School Policy Center. Jennifer Dounay, project manager for ECS' High School Policy Center, can be reached at 303.299.3689 or jdounay@ecs.org

[1] Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Mapp, *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement.* [report online] (Austin: National Center for Family & Community Connections with Schools, Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 2002, accessed 5 August 2008); available from SEDL: http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf; Internet.
[2] Catsambis, Sophia, *Expanding Knowledge of Parental Involvement in Secondary Education: Effects on High School Academic Success*. [report online] (Baltimore: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At Risk, 1998, accessed 5 August 2008); available from CRESPAR: http://www.csos.jhu.edu/crespar/techReports/Report27.pdf; Internet.
[3] *ibid.*
[4] Public Agenda, “Playing Their Parts: What Parents and Teachers Really Mean by Parental Involvement,” Public Agenda, 1999, http://www.publicagenda.org/specials/parent/parent6.htm and http://www.publicagenda.org/specials/parent/parent6d.htm, (accessed April 18, 2007)
[5] John M. Bridgeland, John J. DiIulio, Jr., Karen Burke Morison, *The Silent Epidemic: Perspectives of High School Dropouts.* [report online] (Washington, D.C.: Civic Enterprises, LLC, 2006, accessed 6 August 2008); available from Civic Enterprises: http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/thesilentepidemic3-06final.pdf; Internet.
[6] Henderson & Mapp, 8
[7] Kyle Zinth, *Parental Involvement in Education.* [report online] (Denver: Education Commission of the States, 2005, accessed 4 August 2008); available from ECS: http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/59/11/5911.pdf; Internet.
[8] OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3313.472
[9] S.C. CODE ANN. § 59-28-150
[10] S.C. CODE ANN. § 59-28-170 AND 59-28-180
[11] OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3313.472
[12] FLA. STAT. ANN. § 1002.23
[13] FLA. STAT. ANN. § 1007.35
[14] FLA. STAT. ANN. § 1002.23
[15] Jennifer Dounay, *Involving Families in High School and College Expectations*. [report online] (Denver: Education Commission of the States, 2006, accessed 16 April 2007); available from ECS: http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/70/37/7037.pdf; Internet.
[16] Bridgeland, DiIulio and Morison, 9-10
[17] Appleseed, *It Takes a Parent: Transforming Education in the Wake of the No Child Left Behind Act.* [report online] (DC: Appleseed, 2006, accessed 6 August 2008); available from Appleseed: http://appleseednetwork.org/Portals/0/Documents/Publications/TransfomEduNoChildLeft.pdf; Internet.

[18] Henderson & Mapp
[19] S.C. CODE ANN. § 59-28-140
[20] CAL. EDUC. CODE § 48985
[21] Angela M. Shartrand, Heather B. Weiss, Holly M. Kreider, M. Elena Lopez, *New Skills for New Schools: Preparing Teachers for Family Involvement.* [report online] (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1997, accessed 24 April 2007); available from the U.S. Department of Education: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/NewSkills/chptr2.html; Internet.

[22] Harvard Family Research Project, *Research Digest: Adolescence: Are Parents Relevant to Students' High School Achievement and Post-Secondary Attainment?.* [report online] (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2006, accessed 25 April 2007); available from Harvard: http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/fine/resources/digest/adolescence.html; Internet.

[23] ARK. CODE ANN. § 6-15-1705
[24] ARK. CODE ANN. § 6-15-1703
[25] S.C. CODE ANN. § 59-28-130
[26] S.C. CODE ANN. § 59-28-140
[27] LA. REV. STAT. ANN. § 17:406.2
[28] Anne Henderson, Bonnie Jacob, Adam Kernan-Schloss, Bev Raimondo, *The Case for Parent Leadership.* [report online] (Lexington: Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, 2004, accessed 25 April 2007); available from the Prichard Committee: http://www.centerforparentleadership.org/case.pdf; Internet.

Policy Brief

High School

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

High School Remediation

By Kyle Zinth and Melodye Bush

October 2008

The Need

The perception of remediation as a means of bringing students up to minimal standards - perhaps an 8th grade competency test or basic literacy — is common. With the majority of states increasing their graduation requirements in the coming years, and with an increasing number of states implementing rigorous end-of-course exams, the need to implement effective policies addressing remediation at the high school level for students expecting to enroll in postsecondary institutions becomes increasingly acute.[1, 2]

Effective remediation at the high school level must serve two distinct populations:

- Those who are likely to drop out of school if they do not receive timely assistance
- Those who need additional help at the high school level before moving on to postsecondary studies, where any remediation will incur costs on them and their parents.

The Context

Measured purely in monetary terms, the costs of providing remediation at the high school level can seem high, but the costs of *not* providing adequate and timely remediation are even higher. The lack of student preparation while in high school for work or college costs the nation $3.7 billion a year. Of that total, $1.4 billion is spent providing remediation, while almost $2.3 billion is lost due to the diminished earning potential of students who drop out of college without earning a degree.[3]

These costs, however daunting, do not factor in the loss of earnings for students who fail to complete high school, or their subsequent lost earnings and its negative impact on them individually and the nation as a whole. As a 2006 report from the National Center for Education Statistics states:

> *Dropping out of high school is related to a number of negative outcomes. For example, the median income of high school dropouts age 18 and over was $12,184 in 2003 (U.S. Census Bureau 2005). By comparison, the median income of those age 18 and over who completed their education with a high school credential (including a General Educational Development (GED) certificate) was $20,431. Dropouts are also less likely to be in the labor force than those with a high school credential or higher, and are more likely to be unemployed if they are in the labor force (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2004). In terms of health, dropouts over the age of 24 tend to report being in worse health than adults who are not dropouts, regardless of income (U.S. Department of Education 2004). Dropouts also make up disproportionately higher percentages of the nation's prison and death row inmates.*[4]

Clearly, it is in states' interests to provide effective remediation to high school students and to reduce the need for remediation at the postsecondary level for students who have graduated high school.

What are some necessary elements that would need to be in place in the states to ensure that effective remediation is available and provided?

- A Culture of Data Analysis and Use
- Innovative and Flexible Delivery of Remediation Services

- Required Participation
- State Supports

A State Policy Approach

Fostering a Culture of Data Analysis and Use

Students who enter high school with poor reading skills are 20 times more likely to drop out than their highest achieving classmates.

Nobody benefits when a student arrives in high school or college with deficiencies that could have been addressed previous to the student's promotion. Students who enter high school with poor reading skills are 20 times more likely to drop out than their highest achieving classmates.[5] Optimally, no student would enter high school with below-grade-level skills, but many do. For those students it is critical that their low skills are accurately identified so that they can be provided with proper instruction while in high school. Without good data, such accurate identification is impossible.

Data Collection

Quality data systems provide the basis for timely identification of students who need remediation. The availability of the right data allows schools the opportunity to identify students struggling in school and provide them with additional assistance to ensure adequate academic preparation.

A state-level longitudinal data system provides a system through which states can collect and disseminate this vitally necessary information. The Data Quality Campaign (DQC) has identified 10 essential components of a statewide longitudinal data system. While the states are making great progress in implementing components of longitudinal data systems, some key components that the majority of states have yet to implement include:

- Student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned
- Student-level college readiness test scores
- The ability to match student records between the P-12 and postsecondary systems.

To date, four states report that they have implemented all 10 components, although nine states have implemented eight or nine.[6]

In addition, quality formative assessments can provide teachers with much-needed information on where students might be missing concepts — before students get too far behind.

Data Analysis and Use

While identification is certainly necessary, it is not sufficient. Schools must use this information in an effective manner. To that end, state policymakers should seek to encourage and nurture the creation of a culture of data analysis and use in the public schools. As a recent DQC brief states, "Although *collecting* better data is essential, knowing how to *analyze and apply this information* is just as important for meeting the end goal of improving student achievement."[7]

Policymakers and practitioners — not to mention parents and taxpayers — need to know if resources and time are being put to good use. A longitudinal data system enables policymakers to evaluate programs based on data. This enables policymakers to not only ensure that allocated resources are not being wasted, it allows programs with documented success to serve as laboratories from which other teachers, schools, districts and states can learn. Policies in 10 states explicitly require districts to evaluate their remediation programs, and Georgia's department of education is required to annually evaluate the state's remedial education program.[8]

Innovative and Flexible Delivery

Boredom brought on by the failure to see the curriculum's relevance is a major obstacle to learning for high school students. Reporting findings from the High School Survey of Student Engagement, a report from the Center for Evaluation & Education Policy finds that:

- Two-thirds of students are bored in class at least every day
- Seventeen percent of students are bored in *every* class

- Of students who have considered dropping out of school, 60% cite not seeing value in the work they were being asked to do as the reason they considered dropping out.[9]

Indiana's School Flex program allows 11th and 12th grade students who meet specified behavioral and academic indicators to participate in an alternate program aimed at engaging them in relevant learning by allowing them to enroll in either a college, technical career education program or gain employment in a field aligned with their career academic sequence.[10] Selected and defined by districts, career-academic sequences are flexible sequences of courses that help students explore and prepare for a specific career area or group of related occupations. Sequences include progressive exposure to the world of work, with some leading to a certificate recognized by business and industry.

To participate in the program, eligible students must:
- Attend school for at least three hours per day
- Pursue a timely graduation
- Not be suspended or expelled
- Pursue course and credit requirements for a general diploma
- Maintain a 95% attendance rate.

Additionally, students who have fallen behind are often overwhelmed by the need to repeat entire semesters (or more) in classes they've previously failed in order to graduate, and simply quit. This means that effective remediation policies also can serve as dropout prevention policies. Accelerated, intensive and innovative instruction that allows students flexibility in demonstrating competency has the potential to re-engage students who otherwise may fail to complete their schooling. Not all students require the same intensity of intervention as some might need to catch up in a few concepts, others in a single subject area, while far fewer need intensive intervention across all subject areas.

Kentucky policy requires that intervention strategies with accelerated learning opportunities be provided to students who are identified through (1) the 8th grade high school readiness examination as in need of additional assistance to be successful in high school, or (2) the ACT exam as not prepared for entry into credit-bearing course at a postsecondary institution.[11]

High schools are required to collaborate with their districts in developing and implementing accelerated learning that:
- Allows a student's learning plan to be individualized to meet the student's academic needs based on an assessment of test results and consultation among parents, teachers and the student
- May include changes in a student's class schedule.

Florida requires all districts to adopt policies that provide students with:
- Alternative methods to demonstrate competency in required courses and credits
- Credit recovery courses and intensive reading and math intervention courses based on student performance on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test
- Creative and flexible scheduling designed to meet student needs.

Alabama authorizes local boards to establish credit recovery programs allowing students learning opportunities to master concepts and skills in one or more failed courses.[12] Course content must be composed of standards in which students proved deficient rather than all standards of the original course. Schools may offer these courses using computer software, online instruction or teacher-directed instruction.

Similarly, **Louisiana** provides ways for students to recover credit after they have failed a class.[13] Local education agencies are authorized to develop credit recovery programs for students who have taken and failed a course. Such courses must be aligned with state content standards and grade-level expectations, but flexibility is provided regarding student attendance and instructional time requirements that are otherwise in place. Additionally, the state allows students who have failed a course to take a proficiency exam for that course to earn credit.

Requiring Participation

Once a student is identified as needing academic assistance, it is important that interventions actually occur. In some instances this might necessitate that state policy require that districts or schools offer remediation, *and* that identified students participate. Of the 33 states that address student remediation

through policies targeted towards the high school level, only 10 have provisions that require - or permit local education agencies to require - student participation in remediation services.[14]

State policy that explicitly requires students to participate in remediation emphasizes the importance of having all students academically prepared for college and/or work.

Utah requires districts to provide remedial services to students identified through classroom performance, and requires student participation.[15] Students in **Nevada** who have failed the state's high school exit exam twice or more, are required to participate in remediation.[16] Schools and districts in **Arkansas** are required to use multiple means to assess whether a student is in need of remediation, including state end-of-course exams. Students that are identified as in need of remediation are required to participate.[17] Identified students in Kentucky must be provided with intervention services, and districts may require student participation.[18]

State Supports

To ensure that high school remediation is effective, the state must also ensure that districts and schools have the capacity to provide the necessary services. These supports include:

- Financial
- Human
- Student-Centered.

Financial Support

Districts with large numbers of students in need of additional assistance frequently are located in areas of the state where resources are scarce, be it low-income, urban or rural areas. Such districts will require resources to implement effective programs. And just as there is great diversity among school districts in each state, providing flexibility in the means of support can be advantageous.

For example, a noteworthy aspect of **Indiana's** school flex program is that although students may be enrolled for as few as three credit hours, the state continues to fund the school as though the student is attending full-time. This approach encourages schools to participate in the program, as the financial penalty for participation is removed.

Created in 2004, **Washington's** Learning Assistance Program provides additional funds to districts to for remediation of students identified as underachieving by performance on state assessments.[19] Initially aimed at students in kindergarten through 11th grades, the program expanded to include 12th graders in the 2007-08 school year.

To receive funds, a participating district is required to annually submit a plan to the superintendent of public instruction that reflects:

- How accelerated learning plans are developed and implemented for participating students
- How highly qualified instructional staff are developed and supported in the program and in participating schools
- How a program evaluation will be conducted to determine direction for the following school year.

Massachusetts has made grants available to schools that want to participate in the Expanded Learning Time Initiative, a partnership between Massachusetts 2020 and the state department (with support from the legislature and the governor). Participating schools redesign their schedules and add at least 300 more hours for all students in the school with the goal of improving core academic outcomes, enrichment opportunities, and teacher planning and professional development. The state funds $1,300 per pupil for implementing schools. In September 2007, 18 schools (with more than 9,000 students) started the school year as Expanded Learning Time schools. Early results are promising.[20]

Support for Human Resources

Support for human resources might take the form of additional staffing or reallocations of existing staff. Some states - such as **Florida** - take another tack and stipulate that the most at-risk students should have access to the very best teachers.[21] Other state approaches include support for Response to Intervention (RtI) — the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student

need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying student response data to follow-up decisions.

Of note: Research on student engagement supports the fact that having a good relationship with at least one caring adult at school is critical to student success. Responding in 2006 to the fact that almost 29% of state's high school students do not make it to graduation, state policymakers in **Georgia** created a statewide program that makes available Graduation Coaches to each high school in the state. Each coach's primary responsibility is to identify and work with at-risk students and help them get back on the graduation track before they drop out. Graduation coaches also will identify, recruit and engage concerned organizations and agencies to serve in a variety of ancillary roles in their respective communities.

The state will track the success of graduation coaches by reviewing a school's graduation rate, the percentage of students who pass the state graduation exam and the number of students who must repeat a grade.

Funds acquired through **Washington's** Learning Assistance Program may be spent on providing professional development for certificated and classified staff.

Student Centered Resources

To graduate with a standard diploma, high school students in **Virginia** need to earn six verified units of credit by passing end-of-course exams in English, mathematics, laboratory science, history and social science and one elective. As part of its Project Graduation initiative, the state provides students with online resources, including practice tutorials, related tests, instructional modules and resources.

The **Kentucky** Department of Education, the Council on Postsecondary Education, and public postsecondary institutions offer support and technical assistance to schools and districts in the development of accelerated learning.

Several states, including **Kentucky**, **North Carolina** and **Ohio** operate early mathematics testing programs designed to reduce the need for remediation at the postsecondary level. These programs — frequently run by a public institution of higher education — are designed to provide students with a "reality-check" on their mathematics skills while still in high school, prior to enrolling in a postsecondary institution.

Providing feedback while a student is still in high school allows students to take courses to remedy identified deficiencies. This can eliminate or diminish the need for remedial courses at the postsecondary level, which can save students tuition and time otherwise spent earning credits for college graduation.

Conclusion

This paper does not attempt present a definitive list of state approaches to remediation, rather it provides the elements of effective remediation policies and examples of what some states are trying to do to meet the demands of preparing students for college and careers. As pressure increases to meet achievement goals, it is likely that many state policymakers will reevaluate the alignment of state initiatives to ensure that schools are identifying learning gaps early and are intervening as close to the point of need as possible. State policies continue to evolve. How best to serve all students at the high school level is often the most difficult "nut to crack," so ongoing, data-based reflection is critical.

Kyle Zinth, policy analyst, and Melodye Bush, researcher in the ECS Information Clearinghouse, prepared this report. Email: kzinth@ecs.org, mbush@ecs.org

[1] Jennifer Dounay, *Standard High School Graduation Requirements*, Education Commission of the States, accessed 2008
[2] Jennifer Dounay, High School-Level Assessments: Include End-of-Course Exams, Education Commission of the States, accessed 2008
[3] Paying Double: Inadequate High Schools and Community College Remediation, Alliance for Excellent Education, August 2006
[4] Jennifer Laird, Stephen Lew, Matthew DeBell and Chris Chapman, Dropout Rates in the United States: 2002 and 2003, National Center for Education Statistics, June 2006
[5] Straight A's, Alliance for Excellent Education, Volum 5, Number 20, October 2005
[6] Data Quality Campaign Web site, accessed 8/12/2008
[7] Building and Using Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems: Implications for Policy, Data Quality Campaign, April 2007
[8] Student Support and Remediation: State policy requires district or state to evaluate student remediation program, Education Commission of the States,
[9] Voices of Students on Engagement: A Report on the 2006 High School Survey of Student Engagement, Center for Evaluation & Education Policy
[10] Luke Messer, Indiana High School Dropout Information, Presented to Indiana's Education Roundtable, May 2006
[11] KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 158.6459
[12] ALA. ADMIN. CODE R. 290-3-1-.02
[13] LA. ADMIN. CODE TIT. 28, § 2323, § 2324
[14] Student Support and Remediation: Student participation requirements, Education Commission of the States
[15] UTAH CODE ANN. § 53A-13-104
[16] NEV. ADMIN. CODE CH. 389, § 660, NEV. ADMIN. CODE CH. 389, § 661
[17] Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-420, Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1602, Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-2009, ARK. REG. 005.19.006
[18] KY. REV. STAT. § 158.070 , 704 KY. ADMIN. REG. § 3:390, KY. REV. STAT. § 158.6453, KY. REV. STAT. § 158.6459
[19] WASH. REV. CODE ANN. § 28A.165.005 - WASH. REV. CODE ANN. § 28A.900
[20] PowerPoint presentation, Massachusetts 2020 and National Center on Time & Learning; retrieved August 27, 2008 url: http://www.ecs.org/html/meetingsEvents/NF2008/resources/ECSPresentation-session243.ppt
[21] FLA. STAT. § 1003.413

Policy Brief

Early/Middle College High Schools

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 810 • Denver, CO 80203-3442 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Improving Outcomes for Traditionally Underserved Students Through Early College High Schools

By Jennifer Dounay

October 2008

Introduction

Ever-increasing numbers of students — including traditionally underserved students — express the desire to go to college. Workforce projections by the Bureau of Labor Statistics support these aspirations, noting that many of the fastest growing jobs (and jobs with the largest net employment growth) are in health sciences, information technology and other technical fields that require at least technical certification or an associate's degree (or beyond).[1] Yet some observers suggest that the United States is not graduating enough college- and/or work-ready students to fill these positions. This worker shortage is further exacerbated by the fact that an increasing number of cities, counties and states are becoming majority-minority, at the same time that the high school graduation and postsecondary participation rates of minority and low-income students trail those of white and more affluent students. This convergence of circumstances suggests that the nation will graduate a greater shortage of students who are college- and work-ready, which poses clear economic development challenges.

Early college high schools are one emerging method of increasing the rates of high school completion and postsecondary participation of traditionally underserved students and meeting projected workforce development needs. This policy brief, building upon the state policy research in the ECS database on early/middle college high schools, seeks to:

- Define early college high schools
- Clarify how they differ from traditional dual enrollment programs
- Provide the most recent research on the positive impact on academic outcomes for traditionally underserved students who participate in such programs
- Set forth the model state policy components that undergird quality programs.

What's an early college high school?

Jobs for the Future (JFF) indicates that early college high schools most commonly follow four basic models, with "high school into college" programs serving students in grades 9-12, "middle college early college" serving grades 9-13, "middle school into college" serving grades 6 or 7 to 12, and ungraded "gateway to college" programs allowing at-risk students or returning dropouts to complete one to two semesters in a "gateway" program located at a community college.[2]

However, for purposes of this paper, early college high schools are defined as programs — typically geared towards serving low-income, Latino, African American, Native American and first-generation college students, and English language learners — that offer students the opportunity to earn secondary and postsecondary credit. Such programs start in grade 9, with the potential for students, five years after entering high school, to have amassed enough credits to earn a high school diploma and either technical certification, an associate's degree or enough credits to enter a four-year postsecondary program as a junior.

Programs may be located on a high school campus (in a school-within-a-school), on a two- or four-year postsecondary campus, or at a third-party location. According to JFF, programs typically offer small, individualized learning environments (fewer than 100 students per grade) and provide "academic and

social supports that help students succeed in a challenging course of study," as well as "[t]ime for staff collaboration and for including parents and the community in an education partnership."[3]

Some may question whether students who enter high school behind grade level or disengaged from school are truly capable of completing coursework equal in rigor to traditional entry-level postsecondary courses. JFF indicates that some of the best early college high school programs successfully address prior poor student achievement and enhance student engagement by "adopting school-wide literacy practices, focusing on inquiry-based instruction across grade levels and content areas, and creating 'shadow' or 'lab' courses to complement college courses."[4]

The number of early college high schools in the JFF initiative has expanded from just three in 2002-03 to 159 in the 2007-08 school year. Many are established through local partnerships between a high school and postsecondary institution, and are governed by state policies designed to regulate charter schools or dual enrollment programs. However, a small but growing number of states have enacted policies specific to early college high schools. These state policies not only provide state funds but also institutionalize practice, so that programs are not based on the impetus of an extraordinary leader or "go away" if and when external funding streams are no longer available.

How do early colleges differ from traditional dual enrollment programs?

Program characteristics	Dual enrollment	Early college high school
Student grade level	Students typically begin in grades 11-12.	Students typically begin in grade 9.
Eligibility criteria	Students must demonstrate academic potential through GPA, teacher recommendation, etc.	Students are typically not required to meet academic eligibility criteria to participate.
Target population	Target population is mid- to high-achieving students.	Target population is students not being well-served by traditional high schools such as minority and at-risk students.
Curriculum/course selection	Students select individual courses that earn them high school and (hopefully) postsecondary credit.	"The curriculum is designed as a coherent unit, with high school and college-level work blended into a single academic program."[5]
Credit accumulation	Students earn some postsecondary credit. Some states set a cap on the maximum number of postsecondary credits a student may earn.	Structures are established so that students may earn technical certification, an associate's degree or enough credit to enter a four-year institution as a junior.
Area of program focus	Students may take courses in core and elective subject areas.	Postsecondary courses may be focused on a specific area, such as health sciences or engineering.
Guidance	Students may or may not receive guidance and support from the high school and/or postsecondary institution.	All students receive guidance and support.

Positive student outcomes

Data to date suggest that students participating in early college high school programs achieve greater academic success than underserved students in traditional high school programs. According to recent research by the American Institutes for Research (AIR):

Participating students:

- On average, 67% percent of early college students in 2006-07 were minority, as opposed to 61% of the students in the local school district.
- An average of 60% of early college students were low-income in 2006-07, as opposed to 58% of students in the local school district.
- Forty-four percent of early college students in a spring 2007 survey were first-generation college students.

Academic success:

- Early college high schools had an average 94% attendance rate in 2005-06.
- An average of 82% of students scored at the proficient level on their state's English language arts assessment, and an average of 68% scored at the proficient level on their state's math assessment. Early college students, on average, were achieving better results than their peers in the local district.
- Sixty-five percent of early college students in 2006-07 (including 84% of 12th graders) had taken at least one college class, as opposed to 5% of high school students nationwide in 2002-03.
- An average of 85% of early college students stay in their program for the following school year.
- The graduation rate in "eight of the most mature" early college high schools averaged 70%.[6]

JFF data likewise indicate that on average, early college high school attendance rates are over 90%, and that more than 60% of early college graduates enroll in four-year postsecondary institutions, exceeding the nationwide average for their peers.[7]

Model state policy components

This section recommends policy aspects that state policymakers should consider as they seek to develop or build upon state-level supports for early college high schools. Because of the unique target student population, curriculum and goals of early college high schools, various aspects of state policy need to be taken into consideration:

- Access and support
- Program quality
- Finance and facilities
- Addressing alignment for greater success
- Program accountability and evaluation
- "Other" areas.

Access and support

Underserved students and their families typically are less connected in their local school community and less likely to be aware of beneficial opportunities. They are more likely to be first-generation college students whose parents are less equipped to guide them academically and emotionally as they begin to consider college options. Parents of early college high school students may also want to be more involved in their child's education but unsure as to what that involvement might look like.

Policies that foster access to and provide support to students in early college high school programs include the following elements:

Outreach and notification beginning in the middle grades. Because students (in the ECS model) may start early college programs as early as grade 9, they and their parents should ideally be informed of the availability of early college programs — and of the benefits to students of program participation — in the middle grades. **North Carolina** and **Tennessee** require programs to develop methods for early identification of potential participating students in the middle grades, and continuing on through high school.[8]

Requirement that all eligible students be notified. Underserved students and their parents are less likely to be "connected" in the school community, and are consequently less likely to be aware of programs that may benefit them. Two states currently require *all* students to receive notification of the availability of local early college high school programs. **Colorado** provides that all students in target high schools (and their parents) must be annually notified of the availability and requirements of the program.[9] **Texas** requires all students in grades 9-12 and their parents to be notified of opportunities to earn college credit, including through early college high school programs.[10]

Counseling, guidance and support. Underserved students are more likely to be first-generation college-goers, and as such, their parents may be less prepared to provide the guidance and support students need to complete college-level courses and identify college services that may be available to them. Five states require early college high school programs to provide students with counseling or support. **Colorado** requires districts to ensure that any Fast College Fast Jobs program includes regularly scheduled counseling and other appropriate student support services throughout the five years in which

students participate in the program.[11] **North Carolina** and **Tennessee** direct programs to provide consistent counseling and advising so that parents and students can make responsible decisions regarding course taking and can track the students' academic progress and success.[12] **Texas** requires early college programs to provide academic mentoring.[13] **Michigan** applies the term "middle college" to early college high school programs as well. District/postsecondary partnerships that receive grants to support middle colleges focused on health sciences must ensure that an individualized education plan is developed for each participating student.[14]

Parental involvement. Early college high school programs need to keep in mind that parents of many participating students will want to support their child's college aspirations, but may not have the experience, tools or encouragement from the school system to effectively do so. **Colorado** requires eligible school districts establishing Fast College Fast Jobs programs to set additional student participation requirements as deemed appropriate, including requiring a specified level of participation by students' parents.[15] (A state following Colorado's example will need to ensure that such parental involvement requirements provide flexibility and supports for working parents, parents for whom transportation or child care may be an issue, or parents who are not fluent in English.) **North Carolina** and **Tennessee** programs must emphasize parental involvement and provide consistent parent conferencing to ensure parents play an active role in their child's early college experience. Each district/postsecondary partnership application to develop an early college program must indicate the process the program will follow to ensure parental involvement.[16]

Program quality: Instructional and curricular quality with a strategic focus

States need to ensure that early college high schools provide high-quality instruction aligned with state standards that reduces (or eliminates) students' need for remedial instruction upon postsecondary entry. States also should ensure that programs are strategically focused on preparing students for high-demand, high-skill professions.

Instructional quality. While no state specifies that high school or postsecondary instructors in early college high school programs must meet additional certification or professional development requirements, **North Carolina** and **Tennessee** require early college programs to encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods, and to provide flexible, customized instruction. Both states require program applications to describe the qualifications required for individuals employed in the program.[17] **Texas**, meanwhile, designates the postsecondary partner as the staff selecting body. These instructors must either be regularly employed faculty members at the postsecondary institution or meet equivalent standards. Individuals providing college-level instruction at early colleges must be supervised and evaluated in the same way as traditional postsecondary instructors at the institution.[18]

Curricular quality. To maximize their potential, high school-level courses provided in early college settings should be aligned with state standards. High school and college-level courses offered through early college programs should be aimed at reducing students' need to remedial instruction upon postsecondary entry. College-level courses should be equivalent to that provided in traditional postsecondary courses. Programs likewise should strive to integrate academic and technical instruction, and provide real-world, hands-on learning experiences.

> **Standards-based alignment: North Carolina** and **Tennessee** make clear that early college programs must be centered on the core academic standards as set forth in the state-set graduation requirements.[19]
>
> **Elimination of the need for postsecondary remediation: Colorado** specifies that Fast College Fast Jobs courses must be at a sufficient level of rigor to ensure that a participating student will not need remediation upon entry to postsecondary education.[20] **North Carolina** and **Tennessee** require early college programs to adequately prepare students for future learning, either in the workforce or in an institution of higher education, and reduce the percentage of students needing developmental courses upon entry into postsecondary education.[21]
>
> **Postsecondary alignment: Pennsylvania** and **Texas** specify that early college courses, just as regular concurrent enrollment courses in the state, must be identical to those offered traditional postsecondary students, and must use the same curriculum, assessments and instructional materials.[22]

Integration of academic and technical instruction: To receive health sciences grant awards, **Michigan** programs must provide language arts, math and science instruction that is integrated, where appropriate, into the health sciences courses.[23] **North Carolina** and **Tennessee**'s standards for early college programs specify that programs must integrate and emphasize both the academic and technical skills students need to be successful in a more demanding and challenging workplace.[24]

High-demand, career-wage focus. In addition to readying students to ultimately enter the workforce, programs also should focus on preparing students for career areas in which graduating students will be able to find jobs that are in high demand and that will allow them to earn a family-supporting wage. **Michigan** provides awards to support early college programs focused on health sciences.[25] **North Carolina** and **Tennessee** provide that early colleges must enable students to complete a technical or academic program in a field that is in high demand and has high wages. Programs must lead to advanced programs or employment opportunities in engineering, health sciences or teaching. In both states, applications for a district and postsecondary partner(s) to establish an early college program must include a statement of how the program relates to the economic development of the region in which the program will be located. North Carolina and Tennessee both allow a private business or organization and/or the local county board of commissioners ("county legislative body" in Tennessee) to serve as a partner in developing an early college high school. In both states, priority must be given to programs that are most likely to address the economic development needs of the regions in which they are located.[26]

North Carolina and **Tennessee** allow early college programs to be operated in a facility owned by an education partner (i.e., private business or organization, or county board of commissioners).[27] **Michigan** programs receiving health sciences grant awards must provide clinical rotations that give students the opportunity to observe careers in the health sciences.[28]

In **North Carolina** and **Tennessee**, early colleges must enable students who complete such programs to enter high-skilled employment and pass employer exams, if applicable.[29]

Finance and facilities

Funding distribution

As stated in the 2008 ECS policy brief, Issues in Funding Early & Middle College High Schools, not all states award high schools and postsecondary institutions the same amount of funding for early college students as they do for traditional high school or postsecondary students. Lower funding amounts to districts or postsecondary institutions may disincentivize program participation. Four states — **Colorado**, **Michigan**, **Tennessee** and **Texas** — appear to provide the same levels of funding to high schools and postsecondary institutions for serving early college students as they do for serving traditional students.

Tuition costs

States that do not cover early college students' postsecondary tuition costs could deter student participation, especially among low-income students, the target population of many early college high schools. Four states — **Colorado**, **North Carolina**, **Tennessee** and **Texas** — provide that early college students do not pay postsecondary tuition costs.

Saving through sharing

Policies in some states make clear that district and postsecondary partners should strive to share existing facilities and resources. **North Carolina** and **Tennessee** direct early colleges to encourage the cooperative or shared use of resources, personnel and facilities between public schools and postsecondary partners, and effectively use existing funding sources for high school, vocational and postsecondary programs.[30]

Seeking nontraditional sources

Some state policies also encourage early colleges to seek funding sources in addition to traditional (local, state, federal) revenue streams. As mentioned, **North Carolina** and **Tennessee** allow early college programs to be operated in a facility owned or leased by a private business or organization, or the county board of commissioners, if one or more of these is included as a partner in a written early college

agreement. Both states provide that if an education partner is a public body, the program may use state, federal and local funds allocated to that body. North Carolina and Tennessee also provide that a county board of commissioners that is not an education partner may nevertheless appropriate funds to an early college program.[31]

Laws in North Carolina and Tennessee strongly encourage districts and postsecondary partners to seek funds from sources other than federal, state and local appropriations.[32]

Addressing alignment for greater success

Because underserved students are less likely to be able to afford to re-take postsecondary credits that do not transfer to another institution, states should seek to ensure that postsecondary credits earned through early college programs transfer to other public two- and four-year institutions in the state. States should also consider financial supports to help students who have earned some postsecondary credits through early college programs complete a four-year degree program.

Credit transferability. Ideally, state policy should clearly allow students completing postsecondary credits at "College A" to transfer those credits (as "real" credits, not elective credits) to "College B." Two states — **Colorado** and **North Carolina** — have developed articulation agreements that ensure the transfer of credits at public two- and four-year institutions in the state, provided the student earned a "C" or higher in the course.[33]

Financial supports for students to complete four-year degrees. North Carolina EARN [Education Access Rewards North Carolina] grant funds are not limited to students who have participated in the state's Learn and Earn early college high school program, but allow students who have already earned two years of college credit through Learn and Earn to graduate from a four-year program with no college debt. Eligible students must be North Carolina residents (and U.S. citizens); have graduated from a North Carolina high school within seven months of receiving the grant; be enrolled full-time as an undergraduate at a community college, University of North Carolina campus or other eligible North Carolina postsecondary institution; be a dependent on the family's most recent tax return; have a family income no more than 200% above the federal poverty level (approximately $40,000 for a family of four); and be in good academic standing. Award amounts are in addition to other types of assistance. Because award amounts are up to $4,000 per academic year, the EARN grants Web site suggests recipients likely will need to work 10 hours a week or during the summer to graduate from college without student loans.[34]

Program accountability and evaluation

Programs should be held accountable for performance, and such accountability must be shared by both secondary and postsecondary partners. **North Carolina** and **Tennessee** require early colleges to be held accountable for meeting student achievement results. Tennessee specifies that these accountability results must be established by the state board of education, the board of regents and the University of Tennessee system. Both states specify that early colleges must establish joint institutional responsibility and accountability for student support and success.[35]

Texas early college high schools must seek re-approval each year. Administrative code sets forth criteria for which the commissioner of education may deny renewal or revoke an early college's authorization, including a lack of program success as indicated by progress reports and program data.[36]

Even good early college high schools can improve when state policy insists on the monitoring of outcomes, recalibration and improving alignment. Three states — **North Carolina**, **Pennsylvania**, **Tennessee** and **Texas** — require early college programs to undergo an explicit evaluation process, while one additional state — **Colorado** — requires early college programs to report on the number of participating students and other program indicators, but does not explicitly require programs to undergo an evaluation process.

Texas requires each district and postsecondary partner to develop and implement an evaluation process to determine early college program effectiveness. Measures of effectiveness must include student results on state-level accountability assessments and success indicators of graduates at public postsecondary institutions in the state (such as student participation, retention and graduation rates). Beginning with the 2008-09 school year, the commissioner of education must adopt measures, performance standards and

an appeals process to evaluate early college programs. Failure to meet standards may result in sanctions, including a program's closure.[37]

In **North Carolina** and **Tennessee**, program success must be measured by:

- High school retention, completion and dropout rates
- Certification and associate degree completion (Tennessee also includes baccalaureate degree completion as an evaluation measure)
- Admission to four-year institutions
- Postgraduation employment in career or study-related fields
- Employer satisfaction of employees who participated in and graduated from early college programs
- Other measures as deemed appropriate by the state-level consortium administering the early college program (Tennessee only).

North Carolina requires the state board and postsecondary governing boards to annually report the results of program evaluations to the joint legislative oversight committee. Once the boards determine which programs have been most successful, they must jointly develop a prototype plan for similar programs that could be expanded across the state.[38]

Similarly, **Tennessee** directs the consortium to evaluate programs for success and establish best practices and lessons learned from successful programs.[39]

Furthermore, applications to develop early colleges in **North Carolina** and **Tennessee** must provide a description of how the program's effectiveness in addressing the tenets of early college high schools, as defined in legislation, will be measured. These tenets include early and ongoing identification of prospective students, parental involvement, counseling/advising, teacher and curricular quality, and shared use of resources.[40]

"Other" areas

Policymakers may also wish to consider online early college and technical assistance to local programs as they develop state-level policies to support early college high schools.

Online early college high school courses. A 2007 legislative appropriation led to the development of "Learn and Earn Online," through which **North Carolina** is extending early college course offerings to high schools statewide. Learn and Earn Online courses are offered in a variety of disciplines through the University of North Carolina Greenboro and the community college system. Any student in grades 9-12 attending a participating high school who meets course prerequisites is eligible to enroll. As of fall 2008, 325 high schools in the state are participating in Learn and Earn Online, with more high schools anticipated to adopt the program in spring 2009.[41]

Technical assistance. Policies in some states require state-level entities to provide technical assistance to districts and/or postsecondary partners as they develop and implement early college high school programs. In **Tennessee**, that technical assistance must be provided by the consortium that oversees early college programs (in practice, the state's P-16 council), and must rely on data from evaluation and best practices.[42]

Conclusion

In an era when growing numbers of traditionally underserved students are setting their sights on college — and economic projections suggest a growing need for workers in health care, information technology, and other fields that require technical certification, an associate's or four-year degree, or more — early college high schools appear to be a viable means of providing improved access to postsecondary education, by maximizing efficiencies through the reduction of postsecondary remediation and the sharing of existing resources, while meeting emerging workforce development needs.

Jennifer Dounay, project manager for ECS' High School Policy Center, can be reached at 303.299.3689 or jdounay@ecs.org

[1] Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Table 6. The 30 fastest-growing occupations, 2006-2016," accessed 27 August, 2008; available from: http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecopro.t06.htm; Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Table 5, The 30 occupations with the largest employment growth, 2006-2016," accessed 27 August, 2008; available from: http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecopro.t05.htm.
[2] Jobs for the Future, "Portrait in Numbers," accessed 28 August 2008; available from: http://www.earlycolleges.org/Downloads/portrait%20in%20numbers9.pdf.
[3] Jobs for the Future, "The Early College High School Initiative: Overview and FAQ," accessed 27 August 2008; available from: http://www.earlycolleges.org/overview.html.
[4] *ibid.*
[5] *ibid.*
[6] American Institutes for Research and SRI International, *2003-2007 Early College High School Initiative Evaluation: Emerging Patterns and Relationships.* [report online] (Washington, D.C.: Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, May 2008, accessed 16 October 2008); available from the Gates Foundation: http://www.gatesfoundation.org/learning/Documents/ECHSI_Evaluation_2003-07.pdf; Internet; PowerPoint Presentation: *Credit Where Credit Is Due: An Examination of College Course-Taking at Early College High Schools*, by Jamie Shkolnik and Joel Knudson, presented at AERA, New York City, March 24, 2008.
[7] Jobs for the Future, "Portrait in Numbers," accessed 16 October 2008; available from: http://www.earlycolleges.org/Downloads/portrait%20in%20numbers9.pdf.
[8] N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-238.50(b)(11) ; TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-15-101(b)(11)
[9] COLO. REV. STAT. ANN. § 22-35.5-105(5)
[10] TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 28.010
[11] COLO. REV. STAT. ANN. § 22-35.5-105(4)
[12] N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-238.50(b)(6); TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-15-101(b)(6)
[13] TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 29.908(b)(4)
[14] MICH. COMP. LAWS § 388.1664
[15] [15] COLO. REV. STAT. ANN. § 22-35.5-105(3)
[16] N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-238.50(b)(6) and .51(b)(6); TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-15-101(b)(6) and -104(b)(7)
[17] N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-238.50(b)(8) and (d)(1), -238.51(b)(9); TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-15-101(b)(8) and (d)(1), -104(b)(10)
[18] 19 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 4.156
[19] N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-238.50(b)(3);); TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-15-101(b)(3)
[20] COLO. REV. STAT. ANN. § 22-35.5-105(2)
[21] N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-238.50(b)(1) AND (12); TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-15-101(b)(1) and (12)
[22] 24 PA. CONS. STAT. § 16-1613-B; 19 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 4.157
[23] MICH. COMP. LAWS § 388.1664(2)(e)
[24] N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-238.50(b)(5); TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-15-101(b)(5)
[25] MICH. COMP. LAWS § 388.1664
[26] N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-238.50(c)(2) and (d)(3), .51(b)(2) and (d), .52(a); TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-15-101(c)(2) and (d)(3), -104(b)(2) and (d), -105(a)
[27] N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-238.52(a), .53(C); TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-15-105(a), -106(d)
[28] MICH. COMP. LAWS § 388.1664(2)(d)
[29] N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-238.50(c)(1) and (4); TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-15-101(c)(1) and (4)
[30] N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-238.50(b)(4) and (10); TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-15-101(b)(4) and (10)
[31] N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-238.53 and .54; TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-15-105 and -106(f)
[32] N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-238.54; TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-15-107
[33] Colorado Department of Higher Education Policies and Procedures, Section I, Part L, Paragraphs 5.01 and 5.03 (http://highered.colorado.gov/Publications/Policies/Current/i-partl.pdf); Comprehensive Articulation Agreement between the University of North Carolina and the North Carolina Community College System, revised June 2008 (http://intranet.northcarolina.edu/docs/assessment/caa/2008/June/102.51CAA_Modified_June_2008.pdf).
[34] N.C. GEN. STAT. § 116-209.26; Earn Grants Web site: http://www.learnandearn.nc.gov/earnGrants.htm

[35] N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-238.50(b)(7) and (9); TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-15-101(b)(7) and (9)
[36] 19 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 102.1091
[37] 19 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 4.159, 102.1091
[38] N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-238.55
[39] TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-15-108
[40] N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-238.51(b)(11); TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-15-104(b)(12)
[41] N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115D-1.2, 2007 H.B. 1473 (Chapter 323); Learn and Earn Online Web site, accessed 17 October, 2008: http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/learnandearnonline/; John Brim, Assistant Director/Chief Operating Officer, North Carolina Virtual Public School.
[42] TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-15-108(a)

Policy Brief

Teaching Quality – Professional Development

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 810 • Denver, CO 80203-3442 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Improving the Skills and Knowledge of the High School Teachers We Already Have

By Jennifer Dounay and Kathy Christie

October 2008

Nearly 1 million high school teachers (grades 9-12) currently work in schools across this country.[1] And the research is clear — teacher quality is critical to student achievement. Yet while numerous state efforts seek to recruit, train and retain more teachers, fewer initiatives focus on developing teachers, particularly high school teachers, once they enter the classroom. This policy brief examines seven high-leverage components to strengthen teacher professional development at the high school level and provides state policy suggestions for each:

- Deepening conceptual knowledge
- Integrating college and workforce readiness into teacher expectations and instruction
- Developing communities of practice and mentorship supports
- Using data, school- and classroom-level assessment practices and differentiated instruction
- Keeping a focus on instruction
- Addressing organizational professional development
- Using technology to leverage learning.

Deepening conceptual knowledge

As Neelam Khan, William Schmidt and their co-authors note in a 2007 report, "Some research … indicates that few professional development programs are content driven (Kennedy 1998)."[2] However, research and practice point to a few options that provide the conceptual knowledge teachers need to be able to convey subject content to their students. State support for professional development delivered through externship experiences is one means to deepen teacher content expertise.

Another approach is to provide school-based programs that offer teachers opportunities to deepen their own understanding of content, such as mathematical or scientific ideas. Such school-based efforts provide training and coaching that focus on and delve deeply into the competencies and practices that most impact instruction and student learning. In other words, these programs deliver professional learning not as a one-time event, but as sustained job-embedded learning.

Externships

Why it's a good idea: Real-world knowledge and tools — particularly in science and technology — are changing at a rapid pace. Externships provide an opportunity for teachers to keep abreast of these changes, so that they may pass them along to their students. And just like students, teachers need answers to the question, "Why do we need to learn this?" Teachers who have worked only within the field of education can benefit, for example, from first-hand awareness of the changing workplace competencies, skills, and attitudes that students will need to be successful, and from a deeper understanding of how students will be expected to apply classroom learning to real world situations. Their students can likewise benefit from teachers' ability to bring knowledge of the business world into the classroom.

State policy could:

Support externships by providing funding or incentives for initiatives that meet state-set specifications. While many externship programs appear to be local school-business agreements, **Connecticut** has passed legislation to create a "Generation Next" pilot program that provides industry-based job shadowing and internship experiences to public school teachers, including those in regional vocational-technical schools. The Commissioner of Education is authorized to award grants to local boards, regional vocational-technical schools, or state-wide or local business associations, in partnership with such boards of education or schools, for demonstration projects. Externships must be with science or math or technology-intensive businesses.[3]

Alternatively, **Indiana** provides tax credits to businesses that employ teachers in shortage areas (including math and science) during the summer months. Summer jobs must be relevant to the teacher's academic training in a shortage area and use skills and expertise developed through their academic training and/or teaching experience.[4]

Alternative approaches to deepen content knowledge and methodology

Why it's a good idea: In the "MT21" report, William Schmidt and colleagues compared the preservice requirements of middle grades mathematics teachers in the U.S. against those in Taiwan, South Korea, Bulgaria, Germany and Mexico. They found that Taiwanese and Korean mathematics teacher candidates undergo "more demanding and extensive" content and pedagogical preparation than their U.S. counterparts, while the "U.S. is best characterized as having little opportunity for mathematics content and modest opportunities in practical pedagogy."[5]

University of Wisconsin-Madison education researchers have proposed that to promote learning with understanding, mathematics and science teachers need to have the tools to help students:

1. Connect new knowledge to what they already know
2. Construct a coherent structure for the new knowledge
3. Engage in inquiry and problem solving
4. Take responsibility for validating their ideas and procedures.

This kind of teaching requires that teachers have a coherent vision of:

1. The structure of the mathematical or scientific ideas and practices they are teaching
2. The conceptions, misconceptions, and problem-solving strategies students are likely to bring to the classroom and the areas in which students are likely to have difficulty
3. The learning trajectories students are likely to follow
4. The tasks and tools that can provide windows into students' thinking and support their learning and problem solving
5. The kinds of scaffolding that can support students' efforts to engage in sense making and problem solving
6. The class norms and activity structures that support learning.

The researchers found that these types of capacities "cannot be embedded in curriculum materials or scripted into instructional routines. Teachers need flexible knowledge that they can adapt to their students and the demands of situations that arise in their classes. **Acquiring this kind of knowledge requires new conceptions of professional development."** (emphasis added)[6] Such new conceptions of professional development can be provided on-site on an ongoing basis, so that teachers do not have to seek them out.

State policy could:

Provide support for programs based on new conceptions of professional development. For example, **Kentucky** S.B. 2 (2008) calls for the creation of a STEM Initiative Task Force responsible for creating a comprehensive statewide strategic plan. The plan must include, among a number of elements, developing STEM mentoring programs that partner grades 5-12 teachers, their students, or both, with engineers, business professionals, college or university professors, university students, or others with expertise in the STEM disciplines. Programs must link academic coursework with the real world, underscoring the importance of rigorous academic preparation and encouraging pursuit of careers in the STEM disciplines. The bill directs the task force to develop a business plan, aligned with the strategic

plan, that includes measurable benchmarks for progress in achieving the goals in the strategic plan in years one, three and five.

Since 2007, state law in **Minnesota** has required teacher centers to train interested and highly qualified secondary teachers to assist other inservice teachers with mathematics and science curriculum, standards and instruction so that all teachers have access to: (1) high quality professional development programs in mathematics and science that address curriculum, instructional methods, alignment of standards, and performance measurements; enhance teacher and student learning; and support state mathematics and (2) research-based mathematics and science programs and instructional models premised on best practices that inspire teachers and students and have practical classroom application.[7]

Integrating college and workforce readiness into expectations and instruction

Why it's a good idea: In his 2007 report, *Toward a More Comprehensive Conception of College Readiness*, David Conley suggests that "college readiness" encompasses academic knowledge and skills, as well as "key cognitive strategies" such as study skills and self-monitoring. Conley proposes teacher professional development as key to incorporating this college readiness into high school instruction:

> To teach an intellectually challenging class, teachers must be properly prepared and equipped with the understandings of their subject area necessary to evoke in students the desired responses to material, responses designed to deepen their engagement with and understanding of key course concepts and to expand their repertoire of thinking skills and strategies. Teachers must have a reference point for college readiness that extends beyond their own previous experiences in college or self reports from the few students who return to share their post-high school experiences in college.
>
> The necessary support ideally takes the form of professional development activities in which teachers learn to focus their curricula on key ideas and supporting concepts and to teach these through techniques, activities, and assignments that require students to develop the key cognitive strategies necessary for college success. Such activities are often best undertaken in partnership with colleagues from postsecondary institutions. They can include seminars on recent developments in the academic field, debate and discussions of controversial ideas in the subject area, critiques of potential student assignments, and reviews of student writing and a consideration of strategies to improve writing.[8]

However, research suggests that few teachers have the "college knowledge" students need. Studies such as the ACT National Curriculum Survey 2005-2006 (published in 2007) make clear the disconnect between the skills and knowledge prioritized by secondary-level teachers, and the student expectations held by postsecondary instructors of remedial and entry-level, credit-bearing college courses. Research also indicates that high school teachers are largely unaware of the content (or existence) of the college placement exams that determine which college freshmen must spend precious time and tuition dollars on non-credit-bearing remedial classes.

Surveys conducted by Stanford University's Bridge Project also found that students were more likely to ask their teachers than school counselors for information about applying for college. Yet college application requirements and procedures are constantly changing, and few (if any) inservice programs adequately prepare teachers to answer these questions.

Furthermore, teachers themselves can serve as arbiters of which students receive clear messages and which does not. Students in non-honors track courses report receiving less information about college from their teachers than do honors-track students.

Students who are not planning to attend college also need answers to their questions about options open to them after high school, and teachers who have an in-depth understanding of technical and high-skills fields are more likely to effectively answer those questions. What level of math, for example, do you need to become a machinist? An electrician? And what does that mean for student course-taking in high school?

State policy could:

Ensure that teachers are equipped to answer students' questions about college admissions and high-skills careers. The 2007 ECS policy brief "Helping Equip Teachers to Answer Students' Questions on College Knowledge," provides several state policy approaches, including encouraging districts to offer teacher professional development programs on college knowledge and career guidance.

Provide support for professional development that deepens teachers' understanding of alignment (or lack of alignment) between K-12 and postsecondary standards. This might emerge from activities such as regular engagement in vertical teams of teachers and faculty (community college, four-year and technical school) who discuss alignment of expectations and curriculum in their content areas. **Texas** legislation and rules, for example, call for the creation of four vertical teams of K-12 educators and postsecondary faculty, one each in English/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Among their many tasks, such discipline-based teams must develop instructional strategies for teaching courses to prepare students to successfully perform college-level coursework, and develop minimum standards for curricula, professional development materials and online support materials designed for students who need extra help in preparing for college-level coursework. By June 2009, the English language arts team must develop and English language arts curricula and materials, to be approved by the state board for use starting in fall 2009. The other vertical teams must develop similar materials for math, science and social studies, each subsequent fall semester, with the last of the curricula standards and materials developed by September 2011.[9]

Developing communities of practice and mentorship supports

Communities of Practice

Why it's a good idea: Where there are "communities of practice," teachers talk about practice, share knowledge and reflect on their roles in instruction and student learning. They work to achieve common school and district goals. They understand that problems are best solved not in isolation, but together. They continuously improve their knowledge and practice.

State policy could:

Encourage and support practice whereby school and district staff leaders learn from one another to further research and understanding about effective school culture and instruction. For example, 2007 legislation directs the **Iowa** Department of Education, in collaboration with local districts, to establish teacher development academies for school-based teams of teachers and administrators. Each academy must include an institute and provide follow-up training and coaching. The legislature appropriated up to $1,845,000 in the 2007 fiscal year to support the establishment of these academies. In addition, state law allows districts to apply to participate in the student achievement and teacher quality program. Applicant districts must create teacher quality committees that:

(1) Monitor the implementation of the requirements of the student achievement and teacher quality program
(2) Monitor the evaluation requirements of the program to ensure fairness and consistency throughout the district, and develop model evidence for the Iowa teaching standards and criteria
(3) Determine the use and distribution of the professional development funds distributed to the district
(4) Monitor the professional development in each school to ensure that district, school and individual professional development plans are being met
(5) Ensure a negotiated agreement determines the compensation owed teachers on the committee for work responsibilities required beyond the normal school day.[10]

Michigan's School Improvement Framework Rubrics provide clear benchmarks for instruction, review and implementation of curriculum, assessment, etc. These tools can be used at either the building or district level to help staff improve student learning, and are available online. Under the standard for "Meeting Student Needs," for example, one exemplary practice is described as "Analyses of district/building assessments are systematically and routinely used by teacher teams to identify and provide interventions for students who are not mastering benchmarks." Under "Knowledge of Adult Learning," two measures of exemplary practice include: "School leaders have designed structures to assure the successful transfer of learning into practice including opportunities to receive feedback on

teaching strategies, observe exemplary practices and reflect on practice" and "School leaders have instituted professional learning communities throughout the school and have provided common time during the contracted school day for the teams to meet."[11]

The **Illinois** New Teacher Collaborative launched a network, INTC Online, in 2006. To date, this type of online networking opportunity has emerged from local efforts; however, this should not discourage states that recognize the value of professional networks from taking the lead in establishing such networks statewide.

Mentorship and induction supports

Why it's a good idea: One of the reasons new teachers most commonly cite for leaving the profession is a lack of support. Teachers who did not undergo an induction program are twice as likely to leave the profession during their first three years. Induction not only increases retention, but allows teachers to focus on instruction rather than classroom management issues.[12] However, the old mentoring and induction model that leaned toward creating "mini-me's" has lacked results. Selection of top-quality mentors is also key to successful programs.

State policy could:

Establish expectations for quality induction and mentorship programs. What comprises a model mentorship program? The paper "Key Components of a New Teacher Induction and Mentoring Program," based on a literature review and the experience of six Wyoming district induction and mentoring programs, suggests the following elements:

- **Program planning** that includes "a clear vision; commitment to mentoring; a planning and decision making process; and guidelines, policies, and procedures" as well as "clearly defined goals, purposes, roles, and responsibilities for all participants; supportive leadership; and [adequate staffing]."
- **Funding** to support districts, particularly rural districts, in developing, implementing and maintaining programs. Funds should provide salary supplements to mentors to reflect their additional duties and responsibilities.
- **Clearly defined mentor roles and responsibilities** of mentor teachers, e.g., modeling lessons; observing and coaching; modeling the use of technology to enhance instruction; analyzing assessment, curriculum, and instructional planning; gathering resources; guiding teachers to implement effective behavior management strategies; enhancing teacher understanding of data analysis.
- **Mentor training** that includes, for example, effective lesson planning; aligning assessment and curriculum; analyzing student work; collecting and analyzing classroom data; effective classroom strategies and behavior management practices.
- **Clearly defined mentee roles, responsibilities and training** such as training in "learning routines and procedures; lesson planning; classroom management" and discipline, assessing student performance; understanding state and district standards; communicating with and involving parents; time management; etc.
- **Clearly defined administrator roles and responsibilities** that identify "specific ways a principal can support induction and mentoring of new teachers." For example, principals could "take the lead in developing a formal program, commit to funding programs," stop assigning new teachers the most challenging classes, "match teacher caseloads to the level which they student taught," etc.
- **Evaluation** that could include "reflective journals; interviews; focus groups; portfolios; individual learning plans; written narratives; surveys; new teachers retention rates; and student assessment."[13]

To help recruit mentors, states such as **Delaware** allow retired educators serving as mentors to receive a stipend without negatively impacting their retirement benefits.[14]

The **Alaska** Statewide Mentor Project (ASMP) is researched-based and modeled after the nationally renowned program developed by the New Teacher Center at the University of California, Santa Cruz. The ASMP model includes:

- "Rigorous mentor selection
- Full release of master classroom teachers so they can mentor full-time and participate in professional development for mentors" continuously throughout the school year
- "Structured face-to-face teacher/mentor interaction at least monthly with weekly follow-up e-mail and/or phone meetings
- Documentation of specific instructional goals for teachers
- Ongoing mentoring for the first two years of teaching"
- Coaching for principals to help them become successful instructional leaders — by acquiring and demonstrating the professional skills necessary to create a culture that encourages and promotes effective teaching and ongoing learning by all students. [15]

Using data, school- and classroom-level assessment practices and differentiated instruction

Using data

Why it's a good idea: The National Staff Development Council's Standards for Staff Development encourage educators to apply "disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities" and to use "multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact."[16]

A critical and formative aspect of a professional development model is an embedded process of 1) continuously collecting systematic data related to the impact of staff development on classroom practices, 2) analyzing and interpreting these data, and 3) using all the collected data to adjust professional development training and support to more closely meet the learning and classroom-application needs of teachers and school leaders.

Assessment-related professional development targets teacher and administrator understanding of formative assessment and use of data to improve student learning.

State policy could:

Require ongoing professional development on how to evaluate and use data to improve instruction. Florida requires all districts to develop professional development systems based on analyses of student achievement data. In developing and refining their systems, districts and schools must also review and monitor other data, including:

- School discipline data
- School environment surveys
- Assessments of parental satisfaction
- Performance appraisal data of teachers, managers, and administrative personnel
- Other performance indicators to identify school and student needs that can be met by improved professional performance.[17]

Differentiated instruction

Why it's a good idea: The University of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Center for Education Research study mentioned previously ("Scaling Up Innovative Practices in Math and Science") denotes the deeper knowledge that teachers need to most effectively help students learn. Differentiated instruction is important because it recognizes that students learn differently — consequently, teachers need to be able to address students' needs using varied approaches.

State policy could:

Emphasize new conceptions of professional development. For example, funding leadership training that replicates successful programs (e.g., Alaska's Administrative Coaching Program) helps principals become successful leaders who understand and use a variety of evidence of what their students know and can do (i.e., data) to improve teaching and learning. Through such training, principals acquire and are able to demonstrate the professional skills necessary to create a school culture that encourages and promotes effective teaching by all teachers and ongoing learning by all students.

Implement sustainable and replicable models of professional development and evaluate the implementation of such programs. States might require program evaluation as a condition of receiving professional development grants or other funding and require programs to show results prior to being refunded.

Ensure that policy specifically designates differentiated instruction as a key component of professional development programs — and that priority for implementation targets the neediest schools. A **California** bill enacted in 2008 addresses both use of data — and professional development — in differentiating instruction. The legislation authorizes a teacher participating in the Mathematics and Reading Professional Development Program to complete up to 40 of the 80 hours of required follow-up training in:

(1) Data analysis
(2) Alignment of assessment and instruction
(3) Implication of data analysis and its effect on increasing pupil achievement
(4) Impact on pupil success through diagnostic teaching
(5) Differentiating instruction through pacing and complexity
(6) Grouping as an aid to instruction
(7) Statewide and local data management systems.[18]

In **Florida**, the school improvement plan of every building that earns a "C" or lower, or that is designated as in need of improvement under the No Child Left Behind Act, must incorporate specific components, including professional development. The plan must include professional development that supports enhanced and differentiated instructional strategies to improve teaching and learning, and continuous use of disaggregated student achievement data to determine effectiveness of instructional strategies.[19]

Keeping a focus on instruction

Why it's a good idea: A 2005 study of the Virginia turnaround specialist program found that the turnaround principals typically encountered four primary "predictable predicaments" and a larger number of secondary conditions that influenced these four problems. The big four were: (1) Reading problems, (2) Math problems, (3) Attendance problems and (4) Discipline problems.

The secondary conditions included personnel problems, lack of focus, unaligned curriculum, ineffective scheduling, data deprivation, lack of teamwork, inadequate infrastructure, dysfunctional school culture, lack of effective instructional interventions, lack of inclusion of special education students, lack of specialists, low parent involvement, negative perceptions of school, inadequate facilities, inadequate instructional materials and central office instability.[20]

What might this look like?

State leaders can provide a list of anticipated problems — and match professional development or resources to them. They should broadly disseminate best practices that have addressed common difficulties. Conversely, they could help identify what has not had a positive effect on addressing common problems.

State policy can also support development initiatives related to Response to Intervention (RtI). The National Association of State Directors of Special Education defines RtI as the practice of (1) providing high-quality instruction/intervention matched to student needs and (2) using learning rates over time and level of performance to (3) make important educational decisions. While initially geared toward students with special needs, general educators are increasingly applying RtI to provide increasingly intense, multi-tiered interventions.[21] Successful use of this approach, however, is more likely if ongoing training and evaluation supports its implementation.

Organizational professional development

Why it's a good idea: Professional development is typically a learning opportunity for staff, but on a larger scale, it can also benefit school and district leadership. When school or district leaders work to develop school improvement plans, for example, they often require a deeper understanding of what

needs to be done differently. Supporting the development of school and district leadership can improve school and district improvement plans, which ultimately benefit student achievement.

State policy could: Support and disseminate information on collaborative, organization-wide efforts for districts and agencies to become "learning organizations," and embed evaluation as a component of these efforts.

In **Florida**, one section of the School Community Professional Development Act (2006) requires the department of education, public postsecondary institutions, school districts, public schools, state education foundations, consortia and professional organizations to work collaboratively. It also requires the system of professional development to align to the standards adopted by the state and support the framework for standards adopted by the National Staff Development Council.

The department is required to disseminate research-based professional development methods and programs that have demonstrated success in meeting identified student needs. The methods of dissemination must include a Web-based statewide performance support system that contains a database of exemplary professional development activities, a listing of available professional development resources, training programs and available assistance.

The professional development system also must include a master plan for in-service activities for all district employees from all fund sources. The master plan must be based on input from teachers and district and school instructional leaders, and must use the latest available student achievement data and research to enhance rigor and relevance in the classroom.[22]

Michigan's School Improvement Framework Rubrics (described previously) are one means of providing professional development on a school- or district-wide basis. In "Complexity, Accountability, and School Improvement," Jennifer O'Day recommends fostering connections "within and across units to allow access to and reflection on information relevant to teaching and learning."[23]

Using technology to leverage adult learning

Why it's a good idea: Technology allows anytime, anywhere access to resources.

State policy could: Provide means of **electronic conferencing and other electronic tools** (videos, etc.) for more efficient professional development.

The **New Hampshire** Learning Interchange (NHLI) was developed as a means of preparing teachers and providing professional development at the local level and across the state. NHLI provides an online showcase of promising educational practices occurring within the state. Submissions are vetted through a rubric, but once selected, are available online.

The latest **South Carolina** report, "What is the Penny Buying for South Carolina?" recommends that the department consider using Web-based seminars, podcasts, etc. as a substitute for on-site meetings and seminars.

Arkansas legislation passed in 2005 established the Online Professional Development Initiative. State policy requires online professional development courses to be aligned with focus areas identified by the state board, with state curriculum frameworks and content standards, and with the Southern Regional Education Board Multi-State Online Professional Development Standards. In 2006, the Arkansas Educational Television Network made a new portal available to every school and teacher in the state: the Arkansas Internet Delivered Education for Arkansas Schools (IDEAS). Resources offered include, among others: Teacherline, video streaming, and the ability to communicate online with other educators (http://ideas.aetn.org/).

Conclusion

While state policymakers have leveraged substantial resources in recent years to draw more and higher-qualified individuals to teaching careers, relatively few systemic efforts have been leveraged to maintain and improve upon the knowledge and skills of adults once they enter the classroom. The policy

approaches set forth in this paper can help ensure that teachers continuously improve their performance, so as to support continuous student growth.

Jennifer Dounay, project manager for ECS' High School Policy Center, can be reached at 303.299.3689 or jdounay@ecs.org. Kathy Christie, ECS Chief of Staff, can be reached at 303.299.3613 or kchristie@ecs.org.

[1] Digest of Education Statistics 2007, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education 2008.
[2] Neelam Kher, William H. Schmidt, Richard T. Houang, Zhiwen Zou, *High School Mathematics Trajectories: Connecting Opportunities to Learn with Student Performance.* [report online] (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 2007, accessed 28 July 2008); available from MSU: http://hub.mspnet.org/media/data/PROMSE_Aera_2007_Paper.pdf?media_000000002418.pdf; Internet.
[3] CONN. GEN. STAT. § 10-21G
[4] IND. CODE ANN. § 6-3.1-2-1 through -7; IND. ADMIN. CODE tit. 511, r. 1-2-1 through -3
[5] William H. Schmidt, Maria Teresa Tatto, Kiril Bankov, Sigrid Blömeke, Tenoch Cedillo, Leland Cogan, Shin Il Han, Richard Houang, Feng Jui Hsieh, Lynn Paine, Marcella Santillan and John Schwille, *The Preparation Gap: Teacher Education for Middle School Mathematics in Six Countries (MT21 Report).* [report online] (East Lansing: Center for Research in Mathematics and Science Education, Michigan State University, 2007, accessed 28 August 2008); available from the Center for Research in Mathematics and Science Education: http://usteds.msu.edu/MT21Report.pdf; Internet.
[6] Wisconsin Center for Education Research, "Scaling Up Innovative Practices in Math and Science," *WCER Research Highlights* Vol. 16, no. 2, (Summer 2004): 4-5. http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/Publications/highlights/v16n2.pdf
[7] Sec. 14. Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.72, subdivision 5
[8] David T. Conley, *Toward a More Comprehensive Conception of College Readiness.* [report online] (Eugene: Educational Policy Improvement Center, 2007, accessed 14 August 2008); available from EPIC: http://www.s4s.org/upload/Gates-College%20Readiness.pdf; Internet.
[9] TEXAS EDUC. CODE ANN. § 28.008; 19 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 4.171 through 4.176, 74.1001
[10] IOWA CODE ANN. § 284.6(10), 284.13(1)(e), 284.4(1)(C)
[11] Michigan Department of Education, "Michigan School Improvement Framework Rubrics," accessed 28 August 2008; available from: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/OSI_FW_Rubrics_v_157013_7.3.pdf
[12] American Federation of Teachers, *Beginning Teacher Induction: The Essential Bridge.* [report online] (Washington, D.C.: American Federation of Teachers, 2001, accessed 14 August 2008); available from AFT: http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/downloads/teachers/policy13.pdf; Internet.
[13] Robin Dexter, William Berube, Alan Moore, University of Wyoming; Mike Klopfenstein, Laramie County School District #1, Cheyenne, Wyoming , *Key Components of a New Teacher Induction and Mentoring Program.* [report online] (The Mentoring Leadership & Resource Network, n.d., accessed 14 August 2008); available from MLRN: http://www.mentors.net/03library/keycomps.html; Internet.
[14] DEL. CODE ANN. TIT. 14, § 1305(q)
[15] Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, "Alaska Statewide Mentor Project," accessed 28 August 2008; available from: http://www.eed.state.ak.us/State_Board/pdf/Alaska_Statewide_Mentoring_Project.pdf
[16] National Staff Development Council, "NSDC's Standards for Staff Development" (revised 2001), accessed 28 August 2008; available from: http://www.nsdc.org/standards/index.cfm
[17] FLA. STAT. ANN. § 1012.98(4)(b)(2)
[18] CAL. EDUC. CODE § 99237.6
[19] FLA. STAT. ANN. § 1001.42
[20] Daniel L. Duke, Pamela D. Tucker, Melva Belcher, Deloris Crews, J. Harrison-Coleman, Jennifer Higgins, Lesley Lanphear, Melissa Marshall, Harry Reasor, Sharon Richardson, Mel Rose, Michael J.

Salmonowicz, Wayne Scott, Rosalind Taylor, Catherine Thomas, and June West, *Lift-Off: Launching the School Turnaround Process in 10 Virginia Schools.* [report online] (Charlottesville: Darden/Curry Partnership for Leaders in Education, University of Virginia, 2005, accessed 14 August 2008); available from UVA: http://www.darden.virginia.edu/uploadedFiles/Centers_of_Excellence/PLE/VSTPS-Final.pdf; Internet.

[21] National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Council of Administrators of Special Education, Response to Intervention NASDSE and CASE White Paper on RtI accessed 24 September 2008; available from http://www.nasdse.org/Portals/0/Documents/Download%20Publications/RtIAnAdministratorsPerspective1-06.pdf

[22] FLA. STAT. ANN. § 1012.98

[23] Jennifer O'Day, "Complexity, Accountability, and School Improvement," *Harvard Educational Review* Vol. 72, no. 3, (Fall 2002): 293-329. http://www.politicalscience.uncc.edu/godwink/PPOL8687/Wk10%20March%2022%20Accountability/Oday%20Accountability%20and%20Testing.pdf

Policy Brief

P-16

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 810 • Denver, CO 80203-3442 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Landmines P-16/P-20 Councils Encounter — and How They Can Be Addressed (or Avoided Altogether)

By Jennifer Dounay

November 2008

"The best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry"

To improve student transitions from early learning through postsecondary, 38 states have established P-16 or P-20 councils, bringing together a variety of stakeholders, including education leaders across the education continuum, business leaders, state policymakers and other constituents. Yet despite the best intentions of council participants and the promise of P-16 alignment for meaningful education reform, many councils are struggling to achieve their potential. Challenges — of membership, vague agendas, funding, politics — can overwhelm the best of intentions, but such challenges are not insurmountable.

Common problems P-16 councils face — and sections of this paper that address those problems

- *Difficulty finding focus* — see "Agenda," p 5-6
- *The big report that goes nowhere* — see
  - "Too few," p 2-3
  - "Difficulty agreeing on an agenda," p 5-6
  - "No way to measure progress or hold individuals accountable," p 7
  - "Appropriation of resources," p 7-9
- *No funding to get things done* — see "Limited financial resources," p 8
- *No staff to get things done* — see "Limited human resources," p 8-9
- *No public awareness of/support for council's work* — see "Limited financial resources," p 8
- *Lack of continuity when state leadership changes* — see "Political Climate," p 9-10

Building upon the findings of the ECS database on P-16 and P-20 councils, and experience in the states, this policy brief sets forth the numerous challenges that can foil the best-laid plans of P-16 and P-20 councils, and suggests how they can be addressed or avoided altogether. These "landmines" lie in four areas: **Actors**, **Agenda**, **Appropriation of Resources** and **Political Climate**.

Note: While "P-16" and "P-20" refer to different areas of focus ("P-16" denotes a scope of focus culminating in the baccalaureate, while "P-20" extends that scope to graduate, doctoral and professional programs such as medical and law schools), the terms are used interchangeably in this brief.

Actors

Having the right members at the table can help ensure the coherency and continuity of a council's efforts, and increase the likelihood that a council's recommendations will find their way to enactment in policy and implementation by state agencies. Alternatively, alignment efforts can fall short of their potential as a result of "Goldilocks Syndrome": when too few, too many or not the right group of people are at the table. The problem is exacerbated when council members' roles and responsibilities are not clearly specified at the outset, or when council members do not meet on at least a quarterly basis.

Problem 1: Too few

Why is it a problem? Council membership typically includes the state's chief state school officer, higher education executive officer, members of state-level K-12 and postsecondary governing boards, and representatives of business and economic development interests. But councils also should consider including at least one explicit early learning representative, and representatives from the legislative and executive branches. Excluding these three key stakeholder groups can work to the detriment of councils' efforts.

Food for thought: Although chief state school officers can provide one perspective on early learning offerings, prekindergarten and birth-to-5 education programs are administered across multiple departments. Including an early learning representative can help bridge the disjointed early learning space. Perhaps because few states include explicit early learning representatives in council membership, few councils have broached — much less impacted — early learning. Yet when students entering school are not ready to learn, they often fall behind, do not complete high school or do not pursue a postsecondary degree.

And while some raise concerns that including lawmakers on P-16 councils may "politicize" the process, P-16 reform possibilities are limited without the buy-in and support of elected leaders who influence policy and authorize funding. Governors often hold a bully pulpit position; legislators can advocate for council recommendations to be codified and funded.

Including legislators and governors as council members can maintain communication so that state leaders hear directly from education constituencies the challenges they are facing and potential solutions to such problems. And conversely, K-12 and postsecondary leaders can learn from political leaders the roadblocks their solutions may encounter, and ways to overcome these roadblocks.

Inclusion of lawmakers on P-16 councils furthermore reduces the likelihood that the legislature or other agencies will begin building "parallel tracks" because one hand doesn't know what the other is doing. Having everyone at the table reduces the potential for duplication of efforts within a state.

Lastly, councils should seek to ensure that meetings are attended by primary members rather than these members' designees. Allowing members to have designees attend council meetings reduces the likelihood that the council's work will be perceived as important, and that fidelity to council objectives will be maintained.

Admittedly, when a state's legislative majority and governor are of the same party, there may be less need for both branches to be represented on the council, as they are likely to agree on recommendations or proposals. However, when the legislative majority and governor are of opposing parties, inclusion of both sides is of vital importance if council recommendations are to find their way into enacted legislation. Councils convened by a chief state school officer (rather than by executive order), will likely need to overcome challenges to ensure the governor's participation on the council.

What states have done: The table below illustrates how P-16 councils have included early learning representatives from a variety of sources: state-level early childhood departments, coordinating boards or councils; departments of health and human services; state-level advocacy organizations; early learning providers; and university-based researchers.

Early learning constituency	State	Name of state-specific entity
Government/administration		
State-level early childhood department, coordinating board or council	Arizona	Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board
	Delaware	Delaware Early Care and Education Office
	Georgia	Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
	Kansas	Kansas Children's Cabinet
	Kentucky	Early Childhood Development, Kentucky Department of Education
	Pennsylvania	Office of Child Development and Early Learning (jointly overseen by Department of Public Welfare and Department of Education)
	Washington (2)	One member each from Washington Learns Early Learning Council and Washington State Department of Early Learning
Department of health and human services	Arkansas	Department's Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
	Nebraska	CEO, Department of Health and Human Services

On-the-ground		
State-level advocacy organization	California	Preschool California
	Hawaii (2)	One member each from Good Beginnings Alliance and Hawaii Association for the Education of Young Children
	Nebraska	Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children
Local early learning provider	Colorado	Mile High Montessori
	Hawaii	Kamehameha Schools
	Montana	Montana School for the Deaf and Blind
	Ohio	Child Development Center of Franklin County, Inc.
	Wyoming	Wyoming Child and Family Development, Inc.
University-based researcher	California	Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley
Unspecified		
Representatives of the early learning community (generalized)	Arizona, Illinois, Maryland, Virginia	

Nineteen P-16 councils include one or more legislators. Six states — **Illinois**, **Indiana**, **Ohio**, **Oklahoma**, **Pennsylvania** and **Wisconsin** — have avoided politization by including council members who reflect majority and minority legislative leaders. To maximize the likelihood that council recommendations will be heard and supported by those with the greatest potential to advocate for policy change, councils also should encourage the inclusion of legislators who hold legislative leadership positions, or who chair committees related to education.

While 26 states have included a representative of the governor's office (i.e., the governor, lieutenant governor, a policy advisor, etc.), eight states — including some of the states that have seen the greatest momentum in P-16 reform, such as **Indiana**, **North Carolina** and **Rhode Island** — explicitly include the governor as a member of the council, often as a chair or co-chair. The governor's presence clearly sets the tone for the importance of the council's work.

The executive order creating **Arizona**'s P-20 council specifies that members may not send designees to represent them at council meetings, and that members who miss more than three meetings are subject to replacement at the governor's discretion.[1]

The legislation creating the **Indiana** Education Roundtable secures the participation of the governor and chief state school officer by naming them co-chairs of the roundtable.

Problem 2: Too many

Why is it a problem? A search for inclusiveness can result in too many members. A super-sized council may struggle to clearly define member responsibilities, set a vision, mission and agenda for the group, or simply find dates on which a quorum of members can meet. A council's inability to agree due to conflicting priorities or an absence of a clear vision, mission and agenda for the group can ultimately hurt the legitimacy of the council, and influence others to view it as ineffective.

What states have done: Councils under development might wish to follow the example of **Colorado** and other states that embrace the participation but limit the number of community- or institution-based members who vote. Ad-hoc members are invited to participate and vote in Colorado P-20 Council subcommittee meetings, but are not expected to attend meetings of the full P-20 council, and do not vote at full council meetings.

Problem 3: Not the right members

Why is it a problem? Even a moderately-sized council may gain limited policy traction when too many members lack authority to adopt and/or implement policy, and/or appropriate resources. Not having the right members may also impede councils from making the appropriate connections to ensure P-16 alignment.

Food for thought: While there's no "magic number," councils should seek to achieve a balanced number of individuals representing P-12 and postsecondary, and a balance between state-level P-12 and postsecondary representatives, and representatives such as business and community leaders.

Where a majority of members lack authority to make changes at the state level, a council might consider limiting the attendance to one or more "delegates" from such groups, thus also saving the council expenses related to reimbursement of travel costs.

What states have done: Indiana legislation codifying the Education Roundtable provides one means of ensuring a balance among the stakeholders representing P-12, postsecondary, and business and community leaders. Representatives of each of these constituencies are jointly appointed by the governor and state superintendent; senate and house representatives are appointed by the leadership from each chamber. The number of K-12 and postsecondary leaders must equal the number of business and community leaders.[2]

Problem 4: Confusion regarding council mission and member roles

Why is it a problem? Council efforts may be hamstrung when members are not fully apprised of the council's larger vision and mission. Likewise, limited policy traction can occur when members are unclear of their roles and responsibilities.

Food for thought: As early as possible after a council's creation, council members should seek to establish a vision that clearly defines the reason for the council's existence and the roles of the stakeholders who will serve on the council. The council should also define a mission that indicates what the council aspires to accomplish.

Council membership and roles should reflect that the primary duty of P-20 council members is to recommend policy changes, influence legislatures and K-12 and postsecondary governing bodies in enacting these changes, and for council members in positions of authority to see that policy changes are implemented. Community and business voices, by contrast, are present to inform state leaders of needs identified on-the-ground, assist in defining policy solutions to address those needs, inform their constituencies of the council's activities while seeking their buy-in or feedback, and to bring this feedback back to the council.

Another potential role of the business community is to bring to the table where high school and postsecondary institutions are not preparing an adequate number of graduates — or adequately prepared graduates — in key or growing industries in the state, and to be at the table when high school and postsecondary faculty work to establish aligned college/work-ready standards, curricula and assessments. Representatives of the business community should also be invited to participate in conversations about how "real-work" experience can be integrated into high school graduation requirements or teacher preparation/professional development programs, especially when these conversations relate to STEM and career/technical education. Representatives of business may also bring to the attention of other P-20 stakeholders model partnerships between industry and K-12/postsecondary in other states, and seek to replicate these in their own state.

Should a council's recommendations be enacted into policy, business and community members' roles are to keep the council informed of the progress and challenges of implementation at the local level, so that adjustments can be made if necessary.

What states have done: While it is not clear how many councils have developed a vision or mission statement, some 30 P-16 councils have posted their mission statement online, helping increase public accountability for councils to adhere to their stated mission.[3]

It is not apparent from ECS' analysis that states have established the appropriate roles of council members through enabling legislation and executive orders; however, these roles may be clarified through informal communications.

Problem 5: Inertia

Why is it a problem? Even when the right people are on board, councils may suffer from inertia when they meet on less than a quarterly basis. Members may have trouble remembering the proceedings of earlier meetings. Action items may take on less urgency when the council will not meet again for many months.

What states have done: Council meetings occur on at least a quarterly basis in 29 states, including **Arizona** and **Colorado**, whose councils have impacted significant policy change even though their current structures have been in place only since 2005 and 2007, respectively. [4]

Agenda

Once the actors are in place, a council can focus on the question: On which pressure points will the state focus to improve student achievement and smooth transitions from early learning to K-12 to postsecondary? P-20 council efforts can falter when the reform agenda is not reasonably honed, or if the agenda is not tied to specific, measurable, incremental goals that individuals are accountable for achieving.

Problem 1: Too broad

Why is it a problem? P-16 councils can unintentionally hinder their own efforts by setting an overly ambitious reform agenda. Seeking to address too many areas of reform, councils may ultimately achieve few if any reforms. As Jan Kettlewell notes in her commentary, "Setting a P-16 Agenda," the charge to the first Georgia P-16 council, created in 1996, "was rather … all-encompassing, and a state-level agenda that could be acted upon never took root."[5]

Food for thought: A P-16 council's reform agenda, especially at the outset, should focus on a small number of issues (a good rule of thumb might be five). Because the agendas established in enabling legislation or through executive order often target a far greater number of issues, councils need to prioritize those issues. Once a council's recommendations and other activities on initial reform issues has begun to gain traction, it can then address a larger agenda.

What states have done: Indiana's P-16 council has been in place for a decade. Having achieved results on a narrower set of issues, it unveiled a larger, 10-point P-16 reform agenda in 2003.

Problem 2: Too vague

Why is it a problem? Jan Kettlewell also observes in her commentary, "Setting a P-16 Agenda," that the charge to the first Georgia P-16 council was "unfocused," which, in addition to the broad nature of the charge, impeded the council's capacity to develop an actionable agenda.[6]

Food for thought: Noble goals set forth for P-16 councils in enabling legislation or executive orders — improving student achievement, improving postsecondary completion, etc. — need to be distilled into actionable specifics. And when councils are working to identify which issues to address, they should consider whether issues are overwhelming or relatively minor. A smaller question might not demand the full council's attention, while action on an overwhelming conundrum might yield disappointing results. Councils should seek to tackle problems that are challenging, yet solvable.

Problem 3: Difficulty agreeing on an agenda

Why is it a problem? Given that council members represent differing K-12, postsecondary and (hopefully) early learning constituencies, achieving consensus on an initial reform agenda can prove difficult. And as stated earlier, a council's inability to reach agreement on a common agenda can ultimately hurt the legitimacy of the council, and influence others to view it as ineffective. When members indicate an unwillingness or inability to compromise to reach consensus, everyone loses.

Food for thought: A critical question for councils as they begin to set agendas is, "What can I do through this convening of systems that I would be unable to do within my own agency or institution?" In other words, the best areas of focus do not include issues that could be addressed in isolation from other education sectors. Kettlewell suggests that "school-to-college transitions for students" and "college-to-school transitions for educators" (including teachers, administrators and other staff) "constitute an appropriate state P-16 agenda[.]"[7]

Even within these two areas of focus, however, many potential avenues of activity present themselves. Kettlewell asks how states can determine the cause of the high postsecondary remediation rates in math, so that an appropriate course of action can be taken. "Is there a curricular gap between high school and college? A gap in the level of expectations? In the rigor of assessments? Is the gap caused by too few highly qualified math teachers in high schools? By the teaching practices in colleges' introductory mathematics courses?" Careful analysis of all possible causes of system failure and all available data help equip councils with deeper focus and the potential for greater results.

Many states have correctly perceived that they cannot improve the P-12 to postsecondary pipeline if no early learning student data are collected. Likewise, without appropriate data systems, it is impossible to track K-12 students' progression into and success in postsecondary education. To address this absence of data, P-16 councils should make it a priority to assist in the development of longitudinal data systems that provide this crucial information.

What states have done: The majority of P-16 councils currently appear to have longitudinal data efforts underway to identify and address areas of need in the P-16 pipeline.[8]

In a small number of states, legislation or executive order has given the council clear "homework assignments" that set a deadline for the council to issue recommendations intended to inform future legislation or rulemaking. **Ohio** legislation has directed the partnership for continued learning (the state's P-16 council) to issue recommendations on several areas, including the criteria by which state universities might waive the rigorous Ohio core curriculum as an undergraduate admissions requirement; means to assess high school students' college readiness in English and math; and legislative changes that would improve the operation of the state's postsecondary enrollment options (dual enrollment) program.[9]

Texas legislation enacted in 2006 required the P-16 council to recommend to the commissioner of education and higher education coordinating board a college readiness and success strategic action plan to decrease the number of students enrolling in developmental courses at institutions of higher education. The plan had to encompass, among other items, definitions of college readiness and recommendations regarding changes to certification and professional development requirements that would help teachers better prepare students for higher education. The legislation directed the commissioner of education and coordinating board to adopt the council's recommended college readiness and success strategic action plan if the commissioner and board determined it met the requirements set forth in legislation.[10] The council adopted recommendations in November 2006; rules incorporating the recommendations were adopted by the higher education coordinating board in 2007.[11]

Problem 4: No specific, measurable goals

Why is it a problem? Without specific, measurable performance goals, it is impossible for even those councils with a well-honed agenda to determine their state's progress toward or achievement of the council's goals.

Food for thought: The best goals are statistical in nature and hinge on the collection of reliable data, with a reasonable date by which they might be attained. In place of a goal such as, "Students will enter college ready to learn," a goal might state, "The postsecondary remediation rate in mathematics at four-year public institutions will be reduced to 25% by 2016."

How states get it done: Sixteen states already have set numeric P-16 performance goals, either through the P-16 council or independently of it. **Arizona** aims to increase the state's high school graduation rate by 12% by 2012. **Louisiana** plans to improve readiness for postsecondary education, as demonstrated by a 5% increase in the number of students scoring 18 or higher on the ACT English or math sections by 2015. **Arizona** and **Kentucky** intend to double the number of bachelor's degrees awarded by 2020.[12]

Problem 5: No way to measure progress or hold individuals accountable

Why is it a problem? Specific, measurable goals are less likely to be achieved if no means is in place to measure annual progress or hold individuals and agencies responsible for completing components of reform efforts at specified times.

How states get it done: Some states have developed "balanced scorecard" or similar systems to measure progress toward P-16 goals and establish accountability within the system. The Department of P-16 Initiatives in the University System of **Georgia** has developed a balanced scorecard that specifies five goals: (1) Influence improvements in the education of Georgia's students preschool through college; (2) Inform and influence change in P-16 policies and practices; (3) Promote partnerships and customer satisfaction; (4) Ensure organizational effectiveness; and (5) Ensure a departmental culture of innovation and high performance. Each goal has several performance measures. A method of measurement, a baseline year and number, a 2008 target, 2008 results and point person are set forth for each performance measure.

While many states are determined to improve the recruitment, preparation and professional development of teachers, counselors and school leaders, the Georgia balanced scorecard, for example, translates these goals into 13 performance measures and nearly 50 methods of measurement to assess progress. A sample page from the balanced scorecard is provided below.[13]

Performance Measure	Method of Measurement		Baseline Year	Baseline #	2007 Results	2008 Target	2008 Results	Point Person	P-16 Initiative
USG teacher production.	Percent of AFT students who complete teacher preparation programs-- disaggregated by math/science-related and other fields.		2015	TBD[1]		TBD[1]		Mark Pevey	MATH + SCIENCE = SUCCESS Regents' Principles Double, Double Destination Teaching
	Percent of FOCUS students who complete teacher preparation programs-- disaggregated by math/science-related and other fields.		2013	TBD[1]		TBD[1]			
	Number of program completers for initial teacher certification.		2004	3,157	3,822	5,784			
	Number of program completers for initial teacher certification from minority populations.		2004	601	677	1,237			
	Number of program completers for initial teacher certification in middle grades mathematics.		2007	218	218			Mark Pevey	MATH + SCIENCE = SUCCESS
	Number of program completers for initial teacher certification in middle grades science.[3]		2007	185	185				
	Number of program completers for initial teacher certification in high school mathematics.[3]		2007	131	131				
	Number of program completers for initial teacher certification in high school science[3]:	Biology	2007	29	29				
		Chemistry	2007	7	7				
		Physics	2007	0	0				
		Earth Science	2007	1	1				
Effectiveness of USG educator preparation programs on national accreditation standards.	Percent of USG teacher preparation institutions meeting NCATE standards, appropriate for their status (developmental or continuing approval).		1995	100%	Not yet available			Sara Connor	Regents' Principles
	Percent of USG counselor preparation programs meeting CACREP standards.		2005	44%	Not yet available				
	Percent of USG leader preparation programs meeting ELLC standards.		2009	TBD[2]		TBD[2]			

Other states have developed performance measures for councils themselves. The enabling executive order for the 21st Century Jobs Cabinet of **West Virginia**, that state's P-20 council, provides that the governor's office will determine performance measures for the cabinet based on eight specified criteria, including:

- Requiring joint planning and coordination among complementary initiatives
- Identifying duplicative and counterproductive programs and initiatives
- Identifying extant laws, regulation and practices that impede student articulation and transition
- Creating incentives for partnerships among institutions that may include access to innovation funding and mutual performance requirements.[14]

Appropriation of resources

Despite having the right people involved and setting the right agenda, a council's efforts may still fail to live up to their potential for reform because adequate human and financial resources have not been appropriated.

Limited financial resources

Why is it a problem? A lack of funding can limit the impact of the best council efforts. In addition to helping cover the cost of full-time equivalents (FTEs) to implement the council's work, council funding can support communication expenses to build public awareness of, support and demand for reforms.

Food for thought: In difficult economic times, it can be challenging for a state to allocate new funds to support a council's work. However, some councils have looked beyond state funding for financial support. As Jan Kettlewell notes, "The capacity to bring external funding to the table is really important because you don't have money at the state level to fund R&D work, and the truth is if we knew how to solve some of these problems, we would have solved them … If you only sit around the table and wait for the state to fund it all, or some new insight to drop from the sky on how to do this, you're going to stall out."[15]

What states have done: Roughly half of existing P-16 councils report that they receive a legislative appropriation, or that funds to support the council's' work are built into participating agencies' budgets beyond general operating expenses. Councils in 10 states receive business, foundation or other external support. **Arizona**'s P-20 Council is supported in part by tribal grants. The **California** P-16 Council receives grants from multiple foundations. The Intel Corporation has provided a STEM grant to **Colorado**'s P-20 Council. **Hawaii**'s and **Missouri**'s councils receive some federal grant support.

The **Nebraska** P-16 Leadership Council is sustained by three levels of subsidy: (1) "Senior partners," including state agencies and the EducationQuest Foundation, provide funding for the council's operating budget; (2) "Sponsoring organizations," which are state- and local-level associations, provide some financial support; and (3) "Supporting organizations" make in-kind contributions.

Perhaps unique among the states, **Wyoming**'s P-16 council has developed a "sustainability" subcommittee, working to secure three revenue streams for the council: state government/legislative contributions, foundation and private business support.[16]

Council funding also can help cover the costs of developing and maintaining a Web site that can provide members and the general public with information on council meeting schedules, agendas and minutes; council subcommittees and recommendations; links to reports and Web sites that relate to council areas of focus, etc.

Thirty-six states post council information online: 30 states post their council's mission statement; 27 post the council membership list; 22 post a meeting schedule; 17 post meeting agendas and minutes; and 14 states link to the council's authorizing executive order, legislation or board resolution.[17]

Limited human resources

Why is it a problem? One of the greatest challenges is securing staff to coordinate the council's efforts, to research potential policy solutions and to support policy implementation efforts. While some states such as **Kentucky** have enacted P-16 reforms by relying on existing agency staff, other states have seen little P-16 traction because existing staff are stretched thin. Having a minimum .5 FTE or more can prevent council efforts from being delayed or set aside in favor of other priorities.

What states have done: Generally speaking, councils that receive state funding or external support are supported by at least a .5 FTE. With the exception of **Oklahoma** and **Maryland**, those that rely on the "pro bono" support of participating agencies are not staffed by a minimum .5 FTE.[18]

Jan Kettlewell suggests that the two-tiered structure of **Georgia**'s P-16 work has contributed to the success of her state's efforts.

> "[The current P-16 structure] comprises the Alliance of Education Agency Heads, which includes the CEOs of all state education agencies, and the Alliance Implementation Team,

> which consists of two individuals from each agency, with additional people participating in committees. These two groups work interactively, with the alliance setting the goals and the implementation team devising strategies and initiatives to reach them. At least two members of the alliance attend implementation-team meetings to ensure communication between the two groups. … Georgia now has a state P-16 agenda to be acted upon, with specific strategies, initiatives, and points of accountability. Different members of the Alliance Implementation Team take the lead on each strategy, and the work is accomplished through cross-agency teams. …
>
> "We have found … that there is great value in having a two-tiered structure like the one we have in place now. Participation by CEOs is critical to keeping P-16 work high on the agendas of state agencies, as well as of the schools or colleges and universities that each represents. But this is not enough. A second tier of those knowledgeable about P-16 work is needed to lead implementation efforts and sustain progress. Based on Georgia's experience, it is safe to say that having either tier without the other will result in little sustainable progress."[19]

External funds in **Georgia** also have made possible research and development to test

> "strategies in 15 school districts and seven colleges and universities that relate to strengthening the student P-16 pipeline in science and math, and improving the quality of teaching available to both K-12 and college students in these fields. The lessons learned through research and development allow us to then suggest strategies — through the Alliance Implementation Team to the Alliance of Education Agency Heads — for statewide consideration. The R&D work has brought a depth, richness, and credibility to our policy recommendations, and to the P-16 collaborative programs in science and math we are implementing, that would not have been possible without it."

North Carolina also uses a two-tiered approach. The seven-member Education Cabinet, which includes the governor, heads of the state department and state board, the presidents of the two public and one private university systems, and the secretary of health and human services, meets one to three times a year. An unofficial "kitchen cabinet" — comprised of one staff member who supports each Cabinet member — meets every six to eight weeks, as needed.[20]

Political Climate

A state's culture and political climate can make or break the best-designed P-16 efforts. As Patrick Callan and Michael Kirst observe, "States that are successful in integrating precollegiate and higher education share the presence of an external civic culture that stresses a belief that the two levels must come together to improve the labor force and the economy."[21]

Yet states face a number of challenges that can thwart the fostering of this civic culture. While these challenges tend to fall into the categories of "Actors," "Agenda" and "Appropriation of Resources," ECS wishes to highlight these issues in a separate section of the paper, so as to draw attention to the fact that there are no easy answers to resolve them. If these problems can be anticipated, states may find it easier to work through them — or avoid them altogether.

These challenges include:

- The disruption that occurs when a governor or other popular leader (i.e., chief state school officer) provides vision for the council and sustains its momentum — and then the leader leaves office or the enabling executive order expires, etc.
- Political tensions created by openly partisan leadership or strongly partisan members
- A lack of continuity when a change in state leadership results in an overhaul of successful reform efforts (i.e., new governor with his/her own agenda disregards the work of the existing council and creates a new council with entirely different actors and agenda)
- The coexistence of similar entities doing similar P-16 work in the same state
- An absence of P-16 finance structures that incentivize P-12 and postsecondary collaboration
- An absence of P-16 accountability structures to support student transitions from early learning through postsecondary.

Even where these challenges exist, all is not lost, however. A lack of continuity following a change in state leadership may be mitigated by actions such as changing the locus of authority for establishing a P-16 council, or modifying the membership.

In terms of P-16 finance structures, the 2005 study The Governance Divide: A Report on a Four-State Study on Improving College Readiness and Success suggests that when states have multiple committees with discretion over education — K-12, postsecondary and appropriations — it creates an environment of competition among sectors rather than collaboration. The authors suggest that reforms driven by "strong state-level leadership, perhaps with support from the business community" have the potential for positive change.[22] In a 2006 report, the same authors point to a model developed by the Oregon Business Council that would base budgets on per-student costs per service. While obstacles to implementing the model remain, the system would allow the state to "reduce financial inefficiencies, target resources more strategically, improve student achievement across every educational level, and provide a more transparent and unified system of financing. The council has suggested that the benefits would also include more informed decisions for policy and educational leaders; transparency of tax dollar use; the creation of opportunities for broad redesign and reinvention; and increases in program effectiveness by focusing on service quality and continuous improvement."[23]

As for P-16 accountability, Stephen Portch, Chancellor Emeritus of the University System of Georgia outlines one model for such a system in a 2002 briefing paper.[24] Meanwhile, the authors of the aforementioned 2005 and 2006 studies point to components of Kentucky's postsecondary accountability system that have clear connections to K-12 inputs and results.

Closing considerations

While differences in education governance structures, state size and other factors make clear that no "cookie-cutter" solution will work for every state, this policy brief is intended to provide general guidelines to help states think through the current membership, functions and support — and the political climate of their state — to find solutions to identified problems or prevent problems before they arise.

What we still don't know

Though P-16 councils in some states have been in place for 10 years or more, the following questions are ripe for future research:

- Does it matter whether the council's **coordinating body** (i.e., the lead agency serving a convening role), is the governor's office, or the state department of education, or a higher education administrative office, or some combination thereof?
- Does it matter who provides the **staffing for the council** — whether it's the governor's office, the state education agency (SEA), a higher education body, or some combination thereof? That is, might a directive hold more weight coming from the governor's office instead of the SEA — but then again, in an age of term limits, might there be more experience and institutional stability in the SEA or higher education body? And when there are staff, how many are enough? How many FTEs might be too many? Can having staff lead to implementation of projects that duplicate individual institutions efforts?
- Does it matter where the council receives its **funding** — from department budgets, foundation or business support?
- What is the impact of **local and/or regional councils** in identifying needs on the ground? Is it bringing them to the attention of state-level leaders, helping ensure reforms are implemented with fidelity on the ground, and/or providing a "support group" among local and regional role-players across a state? Are they necessary in all but the smallest states? And to what degree do the questions regarding state-level council's coordinating body, staffing and funding apply to local and regional councils?

The answers to these questions may help states to avoid landmines even more effectively — and address those not yet foreseen.

Jennifer Dounay, project manager for ECS' High School Policy Center, can be reached at 303.299.3689 or jdounay@ecs.org

[1] Arizona Executive Order 2008-14
[2] IND. CODE ANN. § 20-19-4-3
[3] Editorial Projects in Education, *Diplomas Count 2008*, "P-16 Councils — Online Information," accessed August 12, 2008 at http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/dc/2008/40ecs_overview-online.h27.pdf
[4] ECS database, "P-16/P-20 Councils: Council Meets at Least Once a Quarter," (accessed 13 August 2008); available from: http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=2044
[5] Jan Kettlewell, "Setting a P-16 Agenda," as published in *Diplomas Count 2008*. *Education Week*. Vol. 27, no. 40, (June 5, 2008), 22, 26-27.
[6] *ibid.*
[7] *ibid.*
[8] ECS database, "P-16/P-20 Councils: List of Issues/Initiatives Council Is Addressing," (accessed 12 August 2008); available from: http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=2046
[9] *ibid.*
[10] TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 61.0761
[11] *P-16 Implementation Report: College Readiness and Success Strategic Action Plan.* [report online] (Austin: Texas Education Agency and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, December 2006, accessed 19 August 2008); available from TEA http://www.tea.state.tx.us/comm/cr_implementationreport.pdf; Internet; 19 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 4.171 through 1.77
[12] ECS database, "P-16/P-20 Councils: State has P-16/P-20 Performance Goals," (accessed 13 August 2008); available from: http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=2047
[13] Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, "2008 Balanced Scorecard," revised November 5, 2007 (accessed 13 August 2008); available from: http://www.usg.edu/p16/resources/PDFs/P-16_Balanced_Score_Card.pdf
[14] ECS database, "P-16/P-20 Councils," (accessed 19 August 2008); available from: www.ecs.org/P-20
[15] Scott J. Cech, "P-16 Councils Bring All Tiers of Education to the Table," as published in *Diplomas Count 2008*. *Education Week*. Vol. 27, no. 40 (June 5, 2008), 6-9.
[16] ECS database, "P-16/P-20 Councils: Source of Council's Funding," (accessed 12 August 2008); available from: http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=2043
[17] Editorial Projects in Education
[18] ECS databases, "P-16/P-20 Councils: Source of Council's Funding" and "Council Supported by at Least .5 FTE," (accessed 13 August 2008); available from: http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=2043 and http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=2045
[19] Jan Kettlewell
[20] ECS database, "P-16/P-20 Councils," (accessed 13 August 2008); available from: www.ecs.org/P-20
[21] Patrick M. Callan and Michael W. Kirst, "Righting a Troublesome 'Disjuncture,'" as published in *Diplomas Count 2008*. *Education Week*. Vol. 27, no. 40 (June 5, 2008), 22-25.
[22] Andrea Venezia, Patrick M. Callan, Joni E. Finney, Michael W. Kirst, and Michael D. Usdan, *The Governance Divide: A Report on a Four-State Study on Improving College Readiness and Success.* [report online] (San Jose: National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, September 2005, accessed 19 August 2008); available from NCPPHE: http://www.highereducation.org/reports/governance_divide/governance_divide.pdf; Internet.
[23] Patrick M. Callan, Joni E. Finney, Michael W. Kirst, Michael D. Usdan, and Andrea Venezia, *Claiming Common Ground: State Policymaking for Improving College Readiness and Success.* [report online] (San Jose: National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, March 2006, accessed 19 August 2008); available from NCPPHE: http://www.highereducation.org/reports/common_ground/common_ground.pdf; Internet.
[24] Stephen Portch, *A Noble Opportunity: Leading Education Change Through a P-16 Accountability Model.* [report online] (Denver: Education Commission of the States, May 2002, accessed 19 August 2008); available from ECS: http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/40/03/4003.doc; Internet.

Policy Brief

High School

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 810 • Denver, CO 80203-3442 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Ensuring Successful Student Transitions from the Middle Grades to High School

Kathy Christie
Kyle Zinth
November 2008

The ninth grade is a 'make it or break it' time for students. High schools need to identify eighth-graders who are not ready for college preparatory-level courses and provide rich summer or school-year experiences to bring them up to speed.[1]

-Southern Regional Education Board

Background

The 9th grade year is critical to students' success in high school: The influence of a broader number of peers (both positive and negative); the potential of developing a bad habit such as skipping class; and entry into a larger, sometimes seemingly less caring, environment can all impact how students react.

What does the research say?

Predictors of failure in high school:

- Each course failed in 8th grade increases the odds of non-promotion from 9th to 10th grade by 16%.[2]
- Students who are 15 years or older when they enter high school are at a greater risk of non-promotion, even controlling for previous academic achievement and attendance.[3]
- Although 8th-grade test scores are good predictors of students' likelihood to do well in high school courses, **course attendance is eight times more predictive** of course failure in the freshman year.[4]

Predictors of success in high school:

- Each additional percentage point increase in attendance decreases the odds of repeating 9th grade by 5%.[5]
- Higher-achieving students are considerably less likely to experience non-promotion in 9th grade.[6]
- The higher the number of credits a student attempts in 9th grade, the lower the odds of not being promoted to 10th grade.[7]
- Students attend class more often when they have strong relationships with their teachers, and when they see school and their coursework as relevant and important to their future.[8]

Students' Worries and Fears:

The increased number of students on a large high school campus can create:

- Fear and trepidation
- Feelings of being lost and not being connected
- A strong sense of anxiety, resulting from newfound anonymity.[9]

It is important to note that worries and fears can differ by gender with girls' concerns focused on academic adjustments, while boys' concerns more social/safety oriented.

The Importance of a Systemic Policy Approach to 9th Grade Transition:

> ***Programmatic approaches to addressing dropping out*** *are popular because they are easier to implement than systemic reforms, and they target students who clearly need support. But besides being impractical in schools where most students go off-track, they* ***rarely are found to be effective****. A 'second chance' or 'skimming off' strategy does little for students at risk for future failure, and it does not address problems of average and high-performing students performing below their potential. Too many disconnected programs can also decrease coherence in the instructional program of the school. Flexibility and tailored programs for a few students should not substitute for critical evaluation of schools' instructional programming, and all programs should be developed to align coherently with the general instructional plan of the school. [emphasis added]*[10]

Expert Recommendations

Robert Cooper and Suzanne Markoe-Hayes of the University of California Los Angeles have been engaged in an ongoing study dedicated to developing and evaluating a transition model that creates a college-going culture among 9th grade students.[11] In a 2005 report, they offer four policy recommendations to facilitate effective and successful transitions from middle school to high school and ultimately lead to high school graduation:

1. Allocate resources to support and oversee the 9th-grade transition
2. Fund programs that create intentional opportunities for positive peer network development
3. Educate families about the importance of the 9th-grade transition
4. Urban schools must place an explicit focus on "over-determining" success.

Recommendations from the report are quoted below:

1. ***Allocate resources to support and oversee the 9th-grade transition.***
   Within many urban communities, resource allocation disadvantages incoming 9th grade students. The focus and priority of many schools is placed on juniors and seniors as they prepare for graduation.

2. ***Fund programs that create intentional opportunities for positive peer network development.***
   Students in the Cooper/Markoe-Hayes study report that in high school peer group association is far more influential than the family or the school. While a student's behavior is constrained by school and family rules and regulations, his/her attitudes, ideas and options are not. However, the cumulative influences of family and school are not negated by the strong influence of peer networks; rather, they exist in constant competition. Students in the study who were more successful in negotiating a balance between the competing spheres of influence were those students who reported early success in their academic pursuits. The challenge of negotiating these multiple influences is heightened for many urban students because of their doubly marginalized status of being both poor and of color.

3. ***Educate families about the importance of the 9th grade transition.***
   When parents have not had formal or positive educational experiences, it is difficult for them to properly guide their child in the process. The importance of a smooth transition from 8th grade to 9th grade cannot be emphasized enough, as this transition will determine a student's success in high school as well as decisions about their post-secondary school life. Therefore, there must be an effort made to inform parents of the importance of this transition, especially those who have no formal educational training at this level.

4. ***Urban schools must place an explicit focus on "over-determining" success****.*
   Over-determining success is an idea that, while many evidence-based activities and programs can stand alone and lead to enhanced outcomes, when placed together they can have a multiplied effect on student success. Over-determining success involves creating (and in the case of many 9th graders, exposing them to) opportunities to participate in multiple, evidenced-based activities and programs that enhance academic success and college awareness. Such activities would include cultural and social skill-enrichment, mentoring and access to technology. Schools must be able to demonstrate to students the importance, advantages and realities of postsecondary education by

providing an explicit focus on "over-determining" success. Over-determining success consists of providing students with the resources and information necessary to pursue postsecondary education in amounts that exceed those usually considered to be adequate to accomplish such a goal. Students must be encouraged and prepared to move beyond the educational levels of their families and reconcile both their fears of failure and fears of success. Urban schools must work in partnerships with families to build supportive and nurturing, yet challenging learning environments that help students transition into high school, college and beyond with ease.

Building on these recommendations:

What might supportive approaches and policies look like?

1. Allocate resources to support and oversee the 9th-grade transition.
Dollars might be targeted toward summer “catch-up” programs or other interventions for students who have not achieved at grade level. States might choose to provide incentives for schools that put their best teachers in 9th grade or that provide double doses of math and reading. Examples of these and other approaches are described below.

Washington State’s *Project Graduation* includes:

- A “Gear Up” program to identify 7th- and 8th-grade students needing help
- Four- to six-week summer program for identified incoming high school students
- Extra help to students by providing double doses of math and reading/literacy
- Monitoring through meaningful advisory programs such as an “Advocate” for every family
- A goal of an annual increase in the number of students taking Algebra I in 8th grade
- Lower teacher student ratio in 9th grade — and the best teachers in 9th Grade
- 9th grade teachers with common planning time
- Transition classes for English and mathematics using a block schedule structure
- Career and technical education courses in 9th grade using a block schedule structure.

Hawaii’s 2006-10 P-20 strategic plan includes a recommendation to "ensure that 9th-grade students receive the instructional and support services necessary for successful completion of high school." Suggested means of doing so include utilizing smaller "learning communities," increasing access to tutoring and academic summer camps, and creating a Web site to provide "one-stop" access to information about postsecondary institutions.

Rhode Island policy targets districts with a dropout rate over 15%. Such districts are subject to state department suggestions for specific methods of targeted interventions for students who fail Algebra I or any 9th-grade math class and have insufficient credits to be promoted.

South Carolina recently authorized middle schools to give the high-school-level end-of-course tests to middle schoolers who enroll in, say, Algebra I. Doing so should help reinforce the importance of students’ academic efforts, as end-of-course results count toward graduation.

According to a **Vermont** 2002 department of education publication on high school reform, "students learn best when they are in a physically, emotionally and intellectually safe and respectful environment." One of the recommendations of the report is to develop freshman academies and transition programs to assist entering 9th graders.

Oklahoma’s H.B. 2367 (enacted in 2006) allows districts to adopt an extended-day schedule for grades 9-12. A meaningful piece of this policy requires revocation of authorization for a program if student achievement is not documented.

2. Fund programs that create intentional opportunities for positive peer network development.
Fiscal incentives, for example, could be targeted to schools that address attendance issues head on and

that create freshman academies where 9th graders study and work as a common group — where students can be exposed to high-level curriculum but are provided with necessary support to succeed.

The **Louisiana** legislature approved a 2008 measure requiring the state board to develop methods of targeted intervention or to identify other appropriate existing methods for districts with a four-year cohort graduation rate below 70%. This might include early intervention for students who are at risk of failing Algebra I or any 9th-grade math class, credit recovery or targeting students with attention from graduation coaches in high school. The bill also asks the state board to gather data such as the total number of students who have failed Algebra I or English I, the total number of students who are repeating the 9th grade and the total number of students required to repeat a 9th-grade course.

Florida's Middle School Reform Act (2004) includes provisions that emphasize the importance of planning in middle school; the importance of student accountability in 8th grade; and the importance of grades in 9th grade. The act also focuses on the importance of attendance and encourages the establishment of freshman academies.

Nevada state policy requires the board of trustees of each school district to develop policies to ensure that all high schools with 1,200 students or more provide small learning communities within the school. Such policies are supposed to require guidance counselors, at least one licensed school administrator and appropriate adult mentors to be assigned to 9th graders. The school must also:

- Designate a separate area within the high school for 9th graders to attend class.
- Collect and maintain information on 9th graders, including credits earned, attendance, truancy and other risk indicators.
- Identify special needs of 9th graders with respect to remediation and counseling.

3. Educate families about the importance of the 9th-grade transition.

One way to educate families about the importance of the 9th-grade transition might be to require that students and their parents are given information on colleges' entrance expectations — minimum coursework requirements, GPA, etc. — preferably as early as the middle grades, if not earlier, but absolutely at the beginning of high school.

Since 2005, **Iowa** policy has required that school boards assist 8th-graders with developing a core curriculum plan, and has required boards to report annually to high school students and parents regarding student progress in meeting the goals of completing a core curriculum.

Nevada requires schools to develop methods to increase parental involvement in the education of their 9th grade students.

The **Louisiana** legislature recently addressed truancy. H.B. 1133 requires school staff to notify a parent in writing upon the student's third unexcused absence or unexcused tardiness (defined as leaving or checking out of school unexcused prior to the regularly scheduled dismissal time at the end of the school day). The principal must hold a conference with that parent and the parent is required to acknowledge in writing that he/she has been notified.

For many years, most states have had consequences for parents who do not enforce school attendance, but it is only in recent years that a growing number of them have begun to quantify the number of specific absences that trigger these consequences. For example, Louisiana H.B. 1133 makes the first offense of "habitual truancy" or "habitual absence" punishable by a parent fine of not more than $50 or the performance of not less than 25 hours of community service.

4. Urban schools must focus on "over-determining" success.

The Tennessee State Board of Education adopted rules in 2008 that encourage schools to use students' 8th-grade EXPLORE scores and other assessments to identify students unprepared for 9th grade and, if needed, to step in with assistance. Schools are encouraged to experiment with ways to provide additional support, such as:

- High school readiness programs during the summer prior to 9th grade

- Extended time to master challenging courses, with elective credit given for the additional units
- Tutoring by teachers, peers or community volunteers during, before and after school, and on weekends
- An accelerated program to bring 9th-grade students up to grade level
- Computer assisted programs.

The new policy asks schools to seek ways to personalize the high school experience, including the extension of middle school concepts and practices to the high school. Teachers working in teams, for example, will have the opportunity to get to know students better and meet their needs more appropriately. When the student is in the 8th grade, the student, parent/guardian(s), and faculty advisor or guidance counselor will jointly prepare an initial four-year plan of high school study. It asks high school and middle grades faculty to collaborate in planning curriculum and the transition between middle grades and high school.

South Dakota law requires that parents of students in grades 7-12 be informed every year about what courses their sons and daughters need to take to be prepared for postsecondary-level work.

Over-determining success could be interpreted to include not allowing students to fail. Strengthening insistence on effort is one means of ensuring that students do not fail. For adolescents, motivation is sometimes difficult, and it might be necessary to grasp onto carrots and sticks that — while not optimal — can help hold students' feet to the fire.

ECS has identified a few states that mandate parents be annually notified of whether their child is on track to graduate from high school. **Washington** and **Maryland** require high schools, at the beginning of each school year, to provide students and parents with a copy of the graduation requirements. Washington also requires schools to send parents their student's progress report at the end of each school year. If a student is not making normal progress toward completing the graduation requirements, the high school is required to notify the student and parents of alternative education experiences, including summer school in the area. In addition, **California, Georgia, Maryland, Nevada, North Carolina and South Carolina** all have clear policies requiring parents to be informed about the state's exit exam requirement.

State policy in **Ohio** requires school districts with a three-year average graduation rate of 75% or less (in addition to academic watch and academic emergency districts) to administer practice versions of the Ohio Graduation Tests (OGT) to 9th-grade students.

In **Colorado**, school boards must provide the names and addresses of all 8th graders to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE), which contacts the parents to provide information on postsecondary education: admission guidelines; a student's potential need for remediation; financial obligations that may fall to the student's parent; a statement that a student who fails a course listed in the admissions guidelines may enroll in a remedial course to satisfy those guidelines; information regarding financial assistance (including stipend amounts, tuition and other financial aid), the annual state stipend amount; the annual cost of in-state tuition; the student's share of tuition; and notification that the stipend amount and the amount of tuition may change annually.

Individual Graduation Plans

Through individual graduation plans, more states have begun to assist students and their parents in early goal-setting and annual updates to such plans. According to ECS' database of high school graduation requirements, 20 states either require or soon will require all students to develop a "learning plan" or "individual graduation plan." Such plans often are first established by the parent, student and school counselor when a student is in grade 8, defining the courses the student will take in grade 9 and successive years, culminating in a planned destination the student's first year after high school — the workforce, a two-year or four-year institution, the military or a certification program.

Alignment of high school graduation and college admission standards

A handful of states have aligned their high school graduation and college admission requirements to ensure that young people and their families are aware of college preparation requirements, and to avoid de facto "tracking" of students. These states include Indiana (effective class of 2011), Oklahoma and South Dakota (both class of 2010). For additional information on these states' alignment of high school

graduation and college admission requirements, please see the April 2006 ECS *StateNote*, Alignment of High School Graduation Requirements and State-Set College Admissions Requirements.

Conclusion

Transitional years in a student's education have the potential to throw them off-course as they attempt to successfully continue their education, especially if they — or their parents — are not well prepared for the expectations that await them. The 9th-grade year can act as a stumbling block for students, especially if they've been struggling academically or have picked up bad habits like skipping class. To ensure success in high school, it is important for states to have policies in place that identify students who are likely to experience difficulty with the transition to 9th grade, and that these students are provided with adequate help.

Kathy Christie is Chief of Staff, Education Commission of the States. Kyle Zinth is a policy analyst in the ECS Information Clearinghouse.

Equipping Education Leaders, Advancing Ideas

[1] *Keeping Students Moving Forward on the Journey From the Middle Grades Into High School*, Southern Regional Education Board, October 2005 Url: http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2005Pubs/05V66w_mgtohstransitionobjective6.pdf
[2] *An Extreme Degree of Difficulty: The Educational Demographics of Urban Neighborhood High Schools*, Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 2006 Url: http://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1025&context=gse_pubs
[3] Ibid
[4] *What Matters for Staying On-Track and Graduating in Chicago Public High Schools*, Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago, July 2007 Url: http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/publications/07 What Matters Final.pdf
[5] *An Extreme Degree of Difficulty: The Educational Demographics of Urban Neighborhood High Schools*,, Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 2006
[6] Ibid
[7] Ibid
[8] *What Matters for Staying On-Track and Graduating in Chicago Public High Schools*, Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago, July 2007
[9] Robert Cooper and Suzanne Markoe-Hayes**,** *Improving the Educational Possibilities of Urban High School Students as They Transition from 8th to 9th Grade*, University of California All Campus Consortium on Research for Diversity, September 2005 Url: http://ucaccord.gseis.ucla.edu/publications/pubs/pb-013-0905.pdf
[10] *What Matters for Staying On-Track and Graduating in Chicago Public High Schools*, Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago, July 2007
[11] *Improving the Educational Possibilities of Urban High School Students as They Transition from 8th to 9th Grade*, University of California All Campus Consortium on Research for Diversity, September 2005

Policy Brief

Access

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 810 • Denver, CO 80203-3442 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Strategies to Empower Low-Income and Minority Students in Gaining Admission to and Paying for College

By Jennifer Dounay

November 2008

While much has been written about what schools, institutions, parents, students and communities can do to help underserved students overcome obstacles to college entry, less has been written about state policy approaches to help such students overcome these barriers. And while much of the policy focus has been on smoothing college entry by aligning high school/postsecondary standards and assessments, less has been written about other key policy approaches — particularly those to:

- **Send clear messages to underserved students** and their families about postsecondary options and costs (and financial aid options) (pp. 8-12)
- **Address human resource issues** that impede underserved students from receiving the specialized guidance and support they need (pp. 6-8)
- **Simplify college admissions and federal financial aid processes** (pp. 12-15)
- **Provide personalized guidance** to underserved students completing these processes (pp. 15-16)
- **Address other issues** related to postsecondary access and success (pp. 16-19)

Introduction

For low-income and minority students, access to college is not just about affordability. It's also about figuring out college admission requirements, accessing courses that will prepare them well for college, and reducing the debilitating fear generated by perceptions of college costs and loans.

The statements about the importance of earning a college degree have become all too familiar:

- The U.S. Chamber of Commerce projects that 90% of the fastest-growing jobs in the nation will require some form of postsecondary education.
- Individuals who have completed technical certification or a two- or four-year degree contribute more in local, state and federal income taxes and enjoy incomes that are higher on average than non-degree holders as well as numerous quality-of-life benefits.
- Lower college completion rates among minorities pose a serious economic development issue as a growing number of cities, counties and states are becoming "majority minority," and the U.S. as a whole is projected to be majority minority by 2050.
- Surveys indicate that 80% to 90% or more of high school students express the intent to go to college.

But low-income and minority students are less likely to enter college or complete a postsecondary degree than their higher-income or non-minority counterparts. A growing chorus of experts contend that institutional, state and federal policies create unintended barriers for low-income and minority students. These students comprise a disproportionate number of first-generation college-goers.

This policy brief identifies four types of barriers created by federal, state and local policies that pose a particular challenge for aspiring first-generation college students in the college and financial aid application process:

- Institutional barriers created by the misalignment of high school exit and postsecondary entry expectations; this misalignment is exacerbated by gaps in staff knowledge and a shortage of college counselors
- Lack of public awareness of postsecondary options, costs and financial aid options, particularly among low-income parents and students
- Overly complicated college application and student financial aid application processes
- Lack of assistance to students and their families in completing admissions and financial aid procedures.

Each of these barriers is described in further detail — followed by suggestions for how state-level policy might address each barrier. A final section on "other" barriers to college entry seeks to alert policymakers to emerging issues for which adequate institutional, state and federal policy responses are needed.

Note: Because of the enhanced economic benefits of completing a four-year degree as opposed to a two-year degree, the lower participation rates of low-income and minority students in four-year programs, and the relatively low baccalaureate completion rates of those who transfer from two- to four-year institutions, the focus of this policy brief is on underserved students' access to four-year institutions. However, in some sections, consideration also is given to issues that are specific to entry into two-year postsecondary programs.

Misalignments

Three types of unintentional institutional barriers inhibit the transfer of students — particularly students who are the first in their families to attend college. These barriers are: (1) the misalignment of high school curriculum and postsecondary entrance requirements, (2) the misalignment of high school assessments and postsecondary entrance tests, and (3) gaps in staff knowledge and limited staff capacity.

Misalignment of high school curriculum and postsecondary entrance requirements

Problem: As of this year's graduating high school class (the Class of 2009), no state has aligned the courses needed for high school graduation with the courses required for admission to public four-year postsecondary institutions in the state.[1] Yet one of the "Ten Myths That Students Believe About College" identified by Stanford University's Bridge Project is that "Meeting high school graduation requirements will prepare me for college."[2]

Other findings likewise support the need to send clear messages — particularly to traditionally underserved youth and their parents — about the high school courses that will increase the likelihood students will finish high school college-ready and matriculate in a four-year postsecondary institution. ACT reports that in 2006, 74% of ACT-tested Latino high school graduates hoped to complete at least a bachelor's degree, but "only 58 to 61% of ACT-tested Latino students" with such aspirations "took or planned to take the ACT-recommended core curriculum in high school[.]"[3]

High school course taking in advanced mathematics is associated with higher matriculation rates in four-year institutions. An analysis of federal data on students whose parents did not attend college found that such students who completed 8th grade algebra and advanced math courses in high school were significantly more likely to enroll in four-year postsecondary institutions than their peers who did not take algebra I as 8th graders or advanced math. Yet students "whose parents did not attend college were much less likely than those whose parents had bachelor's degrees or higher to take algebra in 8th grade (34 versus 55%)" and "were also much less likely to complete any advanced mathematics in high school (63 versus 83%).[4]

Levers for change: It is important for state policymakers to recognize that misalignment is a barrier, and to ensure students and parents know early on (i.e., before scheduling grade 9 courses) what courses students need to take and what expectations students need to meet to be college-ready upon high school graduation. Armed with this knowledge, students and parents will be better able to enroll in the high school courses that will prepare young people to pursue their post-high school goals.

- **Align high school graduation requirements and college entrance requirements.** Although it doesn't guarantee admission, taking a default high school curriculum aligned with public postsecondary admissions requirements ensures that students meet at least one of the basic minimum requirements for entry into a four-year institution. Effective with the Class of 2010, the **Oklahoma** and **South Dakota** default high school graduation requirements will be aligned with public postsecondary admissions requirements. **Indiana** will join them with the Class of 2011, as will **Ohio** effective with the Class of 2014 (though postsecondary institutions will be able to waive these requirements under certain circumstances).[5]

- **Require high school graduates to complete requirements generally included in postsecondary institutions' admissions requirements.** A 2006 ECS analysis found that some 25 states do not have state-set college admissions requirements — rather, individual postsecondary institutions set their own admissions requirements.[6] These requirements often include math course taking culminating in geometry or Algebra II, multiple units of lab sciences (as opposed to general sciences) and (less frequently) two units of foreign language. An increasing number of these states are incorporating these typical postsecondary admissions requirements into high school graduation requirements. For example, **Texas** has set a default high school curriculum of four units English, three units math (in Algebra I, geometry, Algebra II), three units lab science, and two units foreign language.[7] **Delaware** will require all but the foreign language units effective with the Class of 2011; two units foreign language will be required effective with the Class of 2013.[8] **Michigan** will require all but foreign language effective with the Class of 2011, and will require two units foreign language effective with the Class of 2016.[9]

- **Require *all* students and parents to be informed of postsecondary admissions requirements prior to high school and thereafter.** Being informed of postsecondary admissions requirements prior to high school entry helps students better prepare and plan their coursetaking sequence. **Colorado**, for example, requires the parents of all 8th-grade students to be provided with the state's higher education admissions guidelines.[10] **South Dakota** requires the board of regents to inform parents of grade 7-12 students annually about the courses needed to prepare for postsecondary-level work and the benefits of such preparation.[11] The materials for grades 7-10 propose a "model program of study" setting forth the English, math, lab science and social studies courses students should take in grades 8-12 to be prepared for life at a postsecondary institution in South Dakota or elsewhere. Online versions of each of the five mailings — to parents of students in grades 7, 8, 9, 10/11 and 12 — are available on the South Dakota Board of Regents Web site. **Texas** requires counselors to inform all students and parents — during the student's freshman and senior years of high school — of coursework designed to prepare students for higher education, and the advantage of completing the "recommended" (default) or advanced high school programs. In addition, legislation enacted in 2007 requires every district to designate one week as "Education: Go Get It" week. During this week, all middle, junior and high schools must provide students with grade-appropriate information on higher education, including the required curriculum in the standard admissions requirements for institutions of higher education.[12]

Although aligning high school graduation requirements with postsecondary admissions requirements will clearly signal to students the courses they need to take to be eligible to apply to a four-year postsecondary institution, such alignment does not guarantee that students will avoid having to spend precious dollars on non-credit-bearing developmental courses once they enter college. To ensure course titles meet content expectations and adequately prepare students for postsecondary coursework, states should consider implementing end-of-course or other measures that demonstrate that students passing a course labeled "Algebra II," for example, are truly meeting common statewide Algebra II expectations.

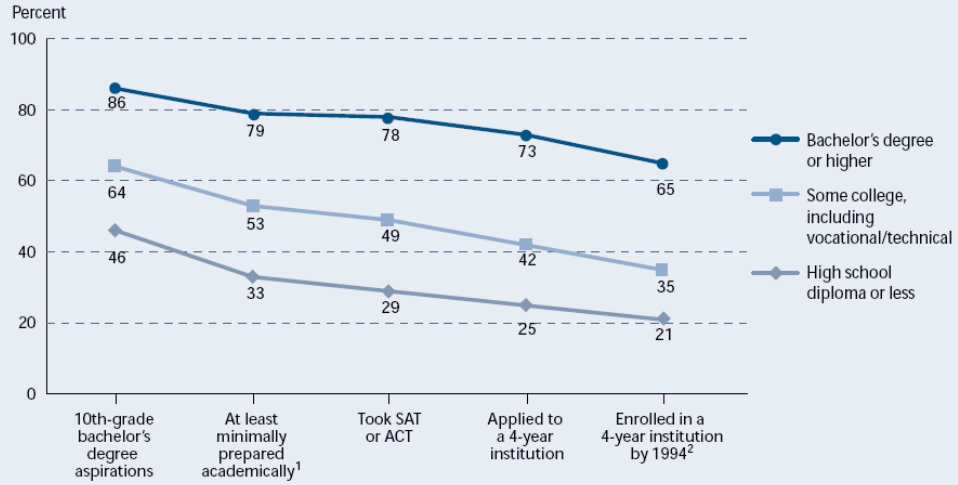
Misalignment of high school assessments and postsecondary entrance tests

Problem 1: Lack of information about or access to college entrance exams. Most students are not required to take the ACT or SAT as part of their high school testing experience. In fact, many students — low-income or otherwise — are not aware that taking the ACT or SAT is a college entrance requirement, as research in several Bridge Project states makes clear. The majority of nonhonors Texas students in the sample "could not explain or define the SAT, whereas almost all in the honors track could."[13] Only one-fourth of the low-income students in the Oregon sample had taken the SAT, even though many low-socioeconomic status (SES) students in the sample expressed the desire to attend a four-year

institution.[14] Slightly over half of *all* students in the Georgia sample knew that SAT scores were important for entering the University System of Georgia or the State University of West Georgia (one of 13 state universities).[15] Just one-fourth of all students in the California, Georgia, Maryland and Oregon samples had taken the SAT or ACT, although many students expressed the desire to go to college.[16]

First-generation college students are more likely to be low-income and are less likely to have taken the ACT or SAT (meaning they are also less likely to enroll in four-year institutions). The table below provides data on the percentage of 1992 high school graduates who took the ACT or SAT, disaggregated by parents' highest level of education, which to some degree can serve as a proxy for family income.[17]

Figure 3.—Percentage of 1992 high school graduates who progressed through each step to enrollment in a 4-year institution, by parents' highest level of education



[1]See the technical note at the end of this essay for the definition of "at least minimally prepared."

[2]Percentages differ from those shown in table 1 because the graduates who enrolled in a 4-year institution but did not have a bachelor's degree goal in 10th grade or skipped other steps (5 percent) are not included here.

NOTE: To be included in each of the second through fifth steps, students must have been included in all previous steps.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES. National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 Eighth Graders, "Third Follow-up" (NELS:1988/1994).

Source: *Students Whose Parents Did Not Go to College: Postsecondary Access, Persistence, and Attainment,* National Center for Education Statistics, 2001.

Furthermore, fees associated with taking college entrance exams can present a barrier to low-income students in particular.

Levers for change: State policy can increase the likelihood that low-income students will be aware of the SAT and ACT as an admissions requirement to four-year institutions, and that they will take these assessments. Policy could:

- **Require (and pay for) all students to take the ACT or SAT.** Effective with the 2008-09 school year, six states — **Colorado**, **Illinois**, **Kentucky**, **Michigan**, **Tennessee** and **Wyoming** — require all 11th graders to take the ACT. (In **Wyoming**, WorkKeys is an alternative option for students.) One state — **Maine** — requires all 11th graders to take the SAT, and effective spring 2011, **Idaho** will require all juniors to take the ACT, SAT or COMPASS college placement test.

- **Improve communication to all students and parents concerning which tests four-year institutions require, when they're given and how well students are expected to perform.** The **South Dakota** materials sent to all parents of students grades 7-12 make clear that students who earn at least a 24 on the ACT and meet other criteria may qualify for the state's Opportunity Scholarship. The "Fall College Readiness Checklist" on the grade 11 mailing encourages students to retake the ACT or SAT in October of their senior year if they need to improve their scores.[18] **Tennessee** requires each school serving students in grades 8-11 to hold a "lottery scholarship day," at which information on postsecondary admissions requirements — including ACT and SAT testing dates and the use of such tests in postsecondary admissions decisions — must be given to students

and parents. When parents sign students' course schedules for the following school year, they must acknowledge that they have received the lottery scholarships information.[19] During each district's "Education: Go Get It" week, **Texas** middle, junior and high school students must receive information on the scores needed on the SAT and ACT for admissions determinations.[20]

Not only do students need to take the ACT or SAT, they need to perform reasonably well on it. As a 2007 SREB report indicates, while the percentage of Hispanic and African American students taking the ACT or SAT in SREB states increased dramatically between 1997 and 2006, in "the eight SAT-dominant SREB states, white students made larger gains than black students in six states, and they made larger gains than Hispanic students in all eight. In the eight ACT-dominant SREB states, white students made larger gains than black students in five states, and they made larger gains than Hispanic students in four." The average scores of Hispanic and African American students lagged those of their white counterparts in virtually every state.[21] State policy should support high curricular expectations and ensure high-quality teachers are in place for all students, so that students are equipped to perform well on these assessments by grades 11 and 12.

State policymakers should consider logistical and other questions before adopting the ACT or SAT for all students.[22] An Achieve, Inc. analysis of the ACT and SAT suggests that neither exam "includes the full range of advanced concepts and skills reflected in the [American Diploma Project] ADP [college- and work-ready] benchmarks and, increasingly, in state high school standards." Based on these findings, the report's authors encourage states administering these exams to all students to augment these assessments to reflect state standards and higher-level knowledge and skills.[23]

Problem 2: Not knowing about (or what's on) college placement exams. Many high school students and their teachers are unaware that upon college entry, students who do not pass placement exams in reading, writing and math must complete remedial coursework in these subjects. One-third of students in focus groups of underserved students for a 2007 National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) report noted that they did not find enough information and needed more information on college placement tests.[24] The costs of taking non-credit-bearing remedial courses pose a greater obstacle to college completion for low-income students.

Levers for change:

- **Embed placement exam items in high school assessments.** The 2006 ECS policy brief *Embedding College Readiness Indicators in High School Curriculum and Assessments* indicates approaches that **California**, **Kentucky**, **Texas** and other states are using to give high school students access to assessment items aligned with placement tests at state postsecondary institutions. Texas legislation enacted in 2007 calls for the replacement of the state assessment with end-of-course exams. The end-of-course instruments must include items that exempt high-scoring students from having to take placement exams upon college entry, and that determine the student's appropriate placement at a postsecondary institution. The state is working to design grade 12 courses to prepare for college entry students not meeting the college readiness benchmark on end-of-course assessments.[25]

- **Provide opportunities for high school students to take college placement exams.** The 2006 ECS policy brief *Embedding College Readiness Indicators in High School Curriculum and Assessments* points to policies in **Arkansas** and **Florida** that allow high school students to sit for college placement exams.

- **Require all students to take college placement exams.** While no state currently requires all students to take a college placement exam, Idaho, effective spring 2011, will require juniors to take either the COMPASS placement test, or the ACT or SAT.

- **Align high school standards and curricula with college placement exams. Colorado** legislation enacted in 2008 calls for the development of a postsecondary and workforce readiness description, and for K-12 standards, curricula and assessments to be backmapped from that description. Minimum admission standards at all public four-year institutions will be aligned with that description. By December 15, 2012, the commission on higher education must review the basic skills placement tests in English and math to ensure their alignment with the description, and revise these tests as needed.[26]

Placement exams used in a given state may vary from institution to institution, and reaching consensus on which items from which placement exams should be benchmarked for college readiness could be contentious. A 2007 analysis by Achieve, Inc. of college entrance and placement exams found that, in general, "admissions tests were found to be more demanding than the placement tests and better balanced in the types of questions asked." Achieve recommends that states use placement exams exclusively for diagnostic purposes to avoid watering down and narrowing the high school curriculum.[27]

Misalignment created by gaps in staff knowledge and a shortage of college counselors

Students' aspirations to college can be supported — or conversely, thwarted — by advice received at the school level.

Problem 1: Lack of teacher preparation. Many teachers are unprepared to field students' questions about applying to college, yet Bridge Project research suggests students are more likely to go to their teachers than to other school staff with questions about college application procedures. Some teachers interviewed by Bridge Project researchers expressed a desire to receive accurate college preparation information to share with students.

Problem 2: Inadequate counselor staffing. A 2007 National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) report, referencing a 2000 Cabrera and La Nasa study, noted that low-income students "who regularly consulted with a counselor were more likely to attend college[.]" Yet focus groups of low-income and first-generation college students convened for the report indicated that counselors were scarce and spread too thin to meet student needs:

> When asked if and how guidance counselors helped them search for colleges, few students indicated they were helpful. Most of the low-income rural high school students indicated they did not know if their school had a guidance counselor or, if it had one, they felt he/she was not helpful. Their responses were similar to the urban African American high school seniors who reported their counselors were either not helpful or unreliable: 'My Mom had to drive me to one college I applied to because my counselor had not mailed the application, as she promised she would.' Additionally, the majority of the parents reported similar experiences with guidance counselors, but acknowledged the counselors were overwhelmed by the large numbers of students assigned to them. They also mentioned counselors spent much of their time being "disciplinarians rather than a resource for preparing students for college."

Yet, "[e]ven though only a few students and parents [in the focus groups] mentioned guidance counselors as being helpful, they emphasized the importance of needing a good high school counselor to help them through an overwhelmingly complicated and time-consuming process."[28]

Data on high school counselors indicate that counselor workloads constrain their ability to provide postsecondary counseling. A 2006 survey of high school counselors conducted by the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) indicates that public school counselors spend only 23% of their time on postsecondary counseling.

Problem 3: Inadequate counselor preparation and professional development. In a study of college counseling in high- to low-resource high schools, counselors even at high-resource schools acknowledged they lacked preparation to provide college counseling. As one counselor at a high-resource school in Maryland stated:

> I'm not trained in [financial aid counseling]. That's not part of my graduate degree. … My graduate degree is primarily counseling, with a little bit of school stuff in it. … This is my second year at counseling seniors, so, you know, the college process is just sort of reading stuff, word of mouth, hearing from other things, doing my own research. … There are a lot of opportunities to go to workshops. … But, I mean, I have two young children so I don't go on college visits. I mean, I just can't get away from home at this point in my career.[29]

In fact, few preservice requirements help prepare counselors to provide postsecondary counseling. NACAC has identified no states that currently require college admission counseling coursework to fulfill counselor course requirements at the undergraduate or graduate level. As of March 2008, NACAC had identified 23 colleges and universities nationwide that offered graduate coursework in college admission counseling; of these, only four require school counselor candidates to complete such coursework.[30]

The 2005 NACAC counselor survey noted that just 41% of public high schools required counselors responsible for college counseling to attend professional development on postsecondary counseling.[31] And whether required or not (or on postsecondary counseling or not), the survey found that counselors in rural and large schools (over 2,000 students) and those with a caseload of more than 300 students were least likely to receive time off for professional development. Counselors in large schools and with large caseloads were significantly less likely to receive professional development funds. (The report does not indicate the content of postsecondary admissions counseling or whether professional development focused on college preparation issues.)[32]

In the study on college counseling in high- to low-resource high schools, college counselors in schools in Florida offered "intensive, one-on-one assistance with financial aid applications." While this assistance was facilitated partially by the simplicity of the award criteria, the researchers suggest that one reason counselors in some other states did not provide such intensive financial aid assistance was a "lack of training in financial aid[.]" In the study, counselors themselves cited a lack of preparation or professional development.[33]

Problem 4: College guidance not clearly defined in counselors' role. Some researchers also contend that the very role of the high school guidance counselor (resolving students' social-emotional issues vs. providing academic advising) is in question, and that counselor training "has historically not included preparation in the area of college counseling."[34]

Levers for change:

- **Incorporate information about college admissions requirements into preservice and inservice requirements for secondary-level teacher certification.** ECS has not identified any state that requires secondary-level certification candidates or teacher professional development to incorporate explicit information about postsecondary course admissions requirements. However, state policies do provide for such professional development under some circumstances. For example, the **Colorado** school counselors corps grant program requires applicants for competitive grants to indicate the extent to which grant monies will be used to provide school staff members other than counselors with professional development that will enable them to provide counseling and postsecondary preparation services.[35]

- **Incorporate information about college placement exams into teacher preservice or inservice training.** ECS has not identified any state policy that does this.

- **Incorporate explicit training on college admissions and placement exams, and on federal and state financial aid programs and application processes, into counselor certification and professional development programs, and provide time and funding for such professional development.** ECS has not identified any state policy that does this.

- **Use state policy to ensure counselors spend time on college preparation activities.** The **Colorado** school counselors corps grant program provides competitive grants to schools to cover the costs of hiring additional counselors. All grant applications must specify whether the grantee has committed to a partnership with one or more postsecondary institutions (or independent agencies that provide career and college preparatory services to students) to increase the capacity and effectiveness of counseling and postsecondary preparation services. Each grant recipient must annually report to the state department of education information indicating an increase in the level of postsecondary preparation services provided, such as the use of individual career and academic plans or enrollment in pre-collegiate preparation programs or postsecondary or vocational preparation programs.[36]

Why not just add more counselors? While additional counselors in high schools may play a role in providing more students with information on college admissions requirements, simply adding more counselors will not necessarily ensure that all students receive the information they need on college preparation. The June 2008 issue of *The Progress of Education Reform* (ECS) provides overviews of five recent research studies that make clear that the interplay of state, local and postsecondary policies, student curricular pathways (academic or technical) and family background (low-income or first-generation college student) can influence the type of information students

need and receive.[37] One of these studies notes that "[o]ne state-level force that appears to be unrelated to the availability of college counseling … is a state mandate for counseling."[38]

Lack of public awareness of postsecondary options/costs and financial aid options

Traditionally underserved students are more likely to attend resource-poor high schools with limited staffing to address their questions about postsecondary options, costs and financial aid criteria. Inaccurate or missing information about these components can be "make or break" factors in such students' decision to go to college. Information about costs and financial aid are particularly crucial. A considerable 59% of low-income students in a 2006 study by the Center for Higher Education Policy Analysis at the University of Southern California (USC) indicated they would use financial aid information to decide where they would go to college, or whether to attend at all.[39]

Problem 1: Low-income parents are less likely to receive (or comprehend) information or participate in college-selection activities. The Bridge Project found that in the six states studied, the majority of parents (61% of parents in California to 68% of parents in Georgia) had received college preparation information. However, when survey responses were disaggregated by family income, the researchers found that less than 50% of the economically disadvantaged parents in Illinois, Maryland and Oregon had reported receiving postsecondary information, in contrast with two-thirds or three-fourths of their higher-income peers.[40]

Furthermore, in both Illinois and Oregon, depending on their socioeconomic status, parents varied in their discussions with their children and the type of activities they pursued to select potential colleges. Low-income parents were much less likely to report having conversed with their children "many times" on college topics, and were more likely than middle- or high-income parents to state they had *never* held these discussions with their children.[41] As the table below makes clear, the Illinois case study identified large gaps between low-income and high-income parents in college-selection activities such as looking at college and university Web sites, and visiting college campuses.[42]

Type of activity	Low-income parents reporting engaging in activity	High-income parents reporting engaging in activity
Looking at college and university Web sites	7.7%	48.1%
Visiting a college campus	5.8%	43.7%
Reading news magazines	7.7%	43%
Reading college brochures	27.9%	60%

These findings are significant, given the research indicating that parental encouragement and involvement have a direct and strong influence young people's early and later educational aspirations and ultimate college choice.[43] One analysis of federal data found that at-risk students and those whose parents did not attend college were almost twice as likely to enroll in a four-year postsecondary education if their parents frequently talked to them about school-related matters, in comparison to their peers whose parents had discussed these topics infrequently or not at all.[44]

In addition, focus groups of low-income and first-generation college students and their parents convened for a 2007 NCES study made clear that underserved families are less likely to have Internet access at home, making college research more difficult. Furthermore, the same set of parents tends to find information on college costs, financial aid and scholarships less comprehensible than other parents.

Low-income parents likewise reported "they did not know what information was important and where they should search for it," while one-third of underserved students reported not finding enough information. These students reported needing more information on out-of-pocket costs such as books, lab and computer fees, and the "availability of financial aid, grants and scholarships." "One student reported, 'When I was surfing online, I really didn't find the tuition for the schools. But now since I got accepted to the school, they sent me the award and how much I have to pay out of pocket.'"

Problem 2: College choices determined by "sticker price" versus actual cost. Research by Excelencia in Education also points to the influence of "sticker price" (as opposed to actual college cost after financial aid) in Latino students' decisionmaking, and the potential need for clearer messages on

college costs to Latino students and their families. Nearly half of all Latino undergraduates in 2003-2004 were enrolled in so-called "Hispanic-Serving Institutions" (HSIs), defined as accredited institutions whose student bodies are at least 25% full-time undergraduate Latino students. For Latinos choosing to attend HSIs, cost was identified as a key factor in their college choice; students indicated their college was often chosen "based on the 'sticker price' of tuition and fees instead of the total cost after integrating actual or potential financial aid offered." Latino graduates who did not attend HSIs were more likely to identify financial aid as a key factor in their college choice. The Excelencia in Education report notes, "Since degree completion is lower at nonselective institutions and Latino students are generally choosing nonselective institutions, these studies suggest that Latinos are not making the most strategic choices possible for their higher education."[45]

Problem 3: College Web sites not user-friendly. In an October 2006 commentary in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Clifford Adelman reports on his efforts to adopt the persona of a high school junior with average grades and find information about admissions, cost and financial aid on 27 community college Web sites. Adelman reports that only 15 of the sites "contained obvious doorways" for high school students to access this key information from the Web sites' home pages. Adelman also found that some sites provided too much information at once. Twelve sites provided no information about how high school students should prepare academically for community college, and only 10 of the sites provided a "contact us" link. On eight Web sites, a search box was the only way to locate information about tuition and fees. Few Web sites provided clear signals to cue parents into essential information. Adelman suggests that to remedy this, a wise first step "would be a radio button or prominent link for parents, either on the portal page or at the beginning of the 'admissions' sequence."[46]

Problem 4: Low-income students and parents are most likely to overestimate college costs. The researchers also found that in the California case study, nonhonors students, low-income students and parents, and students in low-performing schools and their parents, were substantially most likely to overestimate the cost of tuition at both two- and four-year institutions, thus creating a potential false barrier to seeking admission or financial aid.[47] Low-income students and parents in the Illinois case study likewise overestimated the tuition costs of local two- and four-year institutions, with nearly 50% of the low-income students and 43.7% of low-income parents estimating the cost of community college tuition by *more than five times* the actual cost.[48]

Problem 5: Financial aid information that is not sufficiently specific — or provided too late. Students at multiple schools in the Bridge Project's Illinois case study "complained that the information they were given rarely addressed financial aid issues in terms that were sufficiently specific."[49] Many low-income and minority college-goers enter community colleges, which brings with it its own set of issues. Andrea Conklin Bueschel of the Bridge Project additionally notes:

> [M]any community college students do not know several months in advance that they need to apply for financial aid. Aside from a general lack of awareness about filing deadlines, lots of these students do not decide to attend community college until right before the academic term begins. They are often surprised that they will not be able to get the aid immediately upon enrolling.[50]

In fact, many students in the California, Illinois and Maryland Bridge Project case studies erroneously believed that postsecondary institutions evaluated admissions applications based on applicants' "ability to pay." In the Maryland case study, 60% of low-income students "overestimated the importance of ability to pay tuition as an admission criterion" whereas just 37% of their higher-income peers made this error.[51] This misperception might serve as a clear disincentive for low-income students to apply for college admission in the first place.

Furthermore, in a study of college counseling in high-resource/high-achieving, middle-resource/middle-achieving and low-resource/low-achieving high schools in five states, published in the Winter 2008 *Review of Higher Education*, researchers found that in states with large merit-based aid programs, counselors combined financial aid advising with academic advising, regardless of school resource level. In other words, counselors "[work] to ensure that students meet the academic eligibility requirements for at least one of the state's non-need-based financial aid programs." The researchers also suggest that when states had simple eligibility criteria for state merit-based scholarships (the same states in the study with large merit-based aid programs), counselors felt more confident informing students about the availability of state aid and other ways to pay for college, as necessary. The simplicity of eligibility criteria also made it easier for teachers to pass along these eligibility criteria to students.[52]

Respondents in the USC survey of low-income high school students encouraged schools to provide financial aid information as early as grade 9, so that families know they can afford college.[53]

Levers for change:

- **Provide information to all students and their parents, beginning in grade 9 or earlier on postsecondary options, postsecondary tuition and other costs, and on state and federal financial aid opportunities.**
    - Parents of all 8th graders in **Colorado** public schools must be sent information on the annual cost of in-state tuition for attendance at a public higher education institution in the state, the annual state stipend amount, the amount of the student's share of tuition based on the stipend, and the availability of and information about getting financial aid to attend a four-year institution.
    - The information sent to all parents of **South Dakota** students in grade 7 includes: information on the types of degree programs available at public, private, technical and tribal institutions in the state; the average cost of tuition, fees, and room and board at a state public university ($10,371); the dollar amount of different types of federal financial aid (i.e., Pell and Supplemental Opportunity grants, and Perkins and Stafford loans) the neediest college freshman can receive ($12,231); and the availability of the state's Opportunity Scholarship for academically qualified students and of work study and institutionally supported grants and scholarships at public universities, private, technical and tribal institutions. Mailings to parents of students in later grades make clear the cost of tuition and room and board, the amount of federal aid available to the lowest-income students, and the availability of state and institution-level scholarships.[54]
    - During each **Texas** middle, junior, and high school's "Education: Go Get It" week, all students must receive information on higher education options available to students and on financial aid availability and requirements. Texas counselors, during each student's freshman and senior year of high school, must provide all students and their parents with information on financial aid eligibility.[55]

- **Develop and publicly promote state-specific, well-designed online tools to allow users to match needs and interests with available programs and financial aid options.** Focus groups of traditionally underserved students indicated that many students started their Internet research with a general Google or Yahoo search, and were not familiar with their state's postsecondary Web sites.[56] A growing number of states have developed online tools to help students and their families browse postsecondary options and find the campuses that meet their programmatic and financial specifications — and make clear where on the home page high school students need to start. Among these:
    - **Kentucky**'s www.gohigherky.org allows users to compare programs, take virtual tours of campuses and research financial aid. A computerized "Matching Assistant" allows students to select majors, enrollment size (from less than 1,000 to less than 30,000), student to faculty ratio, and other criteria to develop a list of institutions that meet those criteria. The tool allows students to do either a statewide search, or narrow their search to public four-year institutions, community and technical colleges, or private institutions. Other state Web sites, including Maryland's Maryland Mentor, Georgia's Gacollege411 and WisconsinMentor, offer a similar functionality.
    - Rather than selecting specific criteria that match student preferences, **Texas'** www.collegefortexans.com/collegecompare allows students to select up to 18 institutional data points to appear a personalized college search. Data points include average undergraduate in-state tuition for 30 semester credit hours, average cost of on-campus room and board for one school year, statewide or national reputation, and job placement rates for certificate and degree graduates. Students may compare all public four-year institutions in the state or select one or more campuses to compare. Texas also hosts a "College Matcher" that allows users to find programs that meet specific criteria, including minimum and maximum tuition costs.
    - During each student's freshman and senior year of high school, all **Texas** counselors must provide students and their parents with information on the center for financial aid information, www.collegefortexans.com, including its toll-free phone number, Web address, and the various publications available to students and their parents.[57]

- **Develop programs to provide one-on-one guidance and mentoring as students research postsecondary institutions, tuition costs, financial aid opportunities, etc.**
    - The **Oregon** ASPIRE (Access to Student Assistance Programs in Reach of Everyone) program is established to train adult volunteers to provide one-on-one mentoring, resources and encouragement to help students access postsecondary education, learn about the scholarship application process and other ways to pay for postsecondary education, and help high schools build a sustainable community of volunteer mentors. According to the ASPIRE Web site, the program, launched in 1998 and codified in legislation in 2007, is established in 114 high schools and links 1,000 mentors with 6,000 students. The program is for all interested students, not just traditionally underserved students.[58]
    - A private/public partnership, the **Ohio** College Access Network (OCAN) consists of 34 access programs in almost half of the school districts in the state. While most programs provide one-on-one guidance to help students complete financial aid applications, over half of OCAN programs also offer "college resource centers" "in public libraries, malls, religious centers and downtown storefronts" that allow students and their families to research postsecondary options. In some OCAN programs, trained volunteer mentors provide one-on-one academic, emotional and social support to students; some programs offer workshops at various community locations to help families understand financial aid options.[59]

- **Provide school-, community-, college-based and traveling programs offering one-on-one and small group guidance.** As part of the College for Texans Campaign, **Texas** is establishing a network of locally-based centers, called "Go Centers," to provide students and their parents with information about colleges and guidance in selecting a college. "Traditional" Go Centers are primarily based on high school campuses, but also can be found on middle school or postsecondary campuses; "satellite" Go Centers have been created in locations such as public libraries, community centers and local workforce centers. "Collegiate G-Force" chapters, Go Centers located on over 60 postsecondary campuses in the state, also offer outreach to high schools, as well as opportunities for college students to mentor high school students through the college selection process.[60] In addition, Mobile Go Centers, based out of four Texas colleges and universities, are a fleet of vans equipped with computers with high-speed Internet connections, "designed to bring college-related information, motivation and assistance to students and their families."[61] All Go Centers are staffed by a "Go Center Sponsor," a trained adult whose duties include assisting students as they research postsecondary, career and financial aid options. Every Go Center offers computers with Web access to allow students and parents to browse online resources, as well as university brochures, college catalogs, resources to help guide students in choosing the right college, and information about scholarships and financial aid.[62]

- **Ensure materials are provided in multiple formats and languages** (i.e., Web sites, DVDs, printed materials, etc.).

- **Evaluate the user-friendliness of state- and institutional-level Web sites.**

- **Launch public awareness campaigns on the essential admissions criteria as well as tuition and other costs at state-level four-year institutions, and on state and federal financial aid criteria**.

- **Simplify state aid criteria to facilitate communication of these criteria to students and parents.** According to researchers, the simplicity of state aid criteria in **Florida** and **Georgia** helped counselors and teachers pass this information along to students.

- **Incorporate training about financial aid options in teacher and counselor professional development programs.**

- **Make resources on college options, planning, selection, costs and financial aid available in multiple locations (i.e., community centers, libraries, etc.) rather than only at the high school.**

In spite of the fact that students and parents receive information in grade 8 that indicates tuition costs and acknowledges tuition costs may increase annually, families may be leery of planning for postsecondary education if they don't know how much tuition may increase by the time their child graduates from high school. States may consider implementing measures that

seek to limit tuition increases for specified cohorts of students, and communicating these cost-control measures to the public.

In addition, online tools are valuable only to the degree that (1) they go beyond a traditional public relations program, (2) access to Web sites is ensured and (3) guidance and support are available as students and parents use the sites. An April 2008 evaluation of the **Florida** Academic Counseling and Tracking for Students (FACTS) by the Florida Legislature's Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government Accountability found that of nearly 140,000 college students in 2006-07, fewer than 15,000 had logged into FACTS and only 936 had used the "local degree program shopping" function. The report's authors suggest that rather than accessing the statewide tool, students were logging onto individual community colleges' Web sites. The authors note, however, that with the policy that all 8th graders use FACTS to develop an Electronic Personal Education Planner as a component of a class required for promotion to grade 9, more students will begin using FACTS.[63]

Complicated college application and financial aid processes

Research suggests that college application processes and fees (including costs associated with obtaining student transcripts) and financial aid application requirements may impede eligible students from entering college.

Postsecondary application processes

Problem: Applications to four-year institutions can vary considerably in what all students are required to include. Students who lack guidance from counselors, parents or others, or who are juggling work and other responsibilities may feel overwhelmed.

In addition, college applications usually must be submitted with application fees, which may pose a barrier to low-income families. While counselors can provide low-income students with application waivers, students may be unaware of the availability of these waivers.

Lastly, students typically must submit high school transcripts to each postsecondary institution to which the student is applying. The bureaucratic processes for students to request the submission of transcripts can appear to be one more hurdle for students struggling through the college application process, and unquestionably increase the workload of high school counselors, who by many reports appear to be already stretched thin, particularly in the resource-poor high schools many traditionally underserved students attend.

These factors may result in students' decisions to limit the number of four-year institutions to which they apply (potentially resulting in lesser chances of being admitted to any four-year institution), or not to apply to any four-year institution and to enter a community college (or not apply to college at all).

Levers for change:

- **Common statewide application.** The **Texas** common college application simplifies the application process by allowing students to complete one application that can be submitted to any Texas public university, and to some public and private two-year schools. Instructions on completing the application are printed in both English and Spanish. Common college applications may be submitted by e-mailing an online application, mailing in a form printed from a Web site or mailing in a preprinted form.[64]

- **E-transcripts.** Some 18 states allow or require the use of electronic high school transcripts, often referred to as "e-transcripts" that can facilitate and reduce the cost of submitting transcripts along with college applications. A growing number of states maintain Web sites that allow students or their counselors to submit applications and e-transcripts from a common statewide Web site, rather than through disconnected preprinted forms or university Web sites.[65] The Indiana e-Transcript Web page for counselors suggests the benefits to students and all educational institutions are that the program:
    - "Is easy for students to use
    - Provides online ordering convenience
    - Tracks transcripts through e-mail notification
    - Guarantees delivery
    - Reduces unnecessary time and effort for counselors

- Reduces cost of postage and mailing materials."

The Web page suggests that with an estimated cost of $6.70 to process each paper-based transcript, and a statewide average of six transcripts requested per student, the cost reduction adds up to more than $40 per student per school, plus savings of over $9 per transcript to each postsecondary institution.[66]

Federal financial aid application processes

Problem 1: Families struggle with overly complicated application processes. As noted by Harvard University economists Susan M. Dynarski and Judith E. Scott-Clayton, the typical household's FAFSA application (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) "is longer and more complicated than the federal tax return."

They also note that the application process includes a long period of uncertainty. Families are not immediately informed of the amount of aid they can expect to receive. Instead, the application goes through a Rube Goldbergian process: It is submitted to the U.S. Department of Education. The Department calculates the "expected family contribution," or EFC. A few weeks after the FAFSA is submitted, the Department sends the EFC to families (but families might have already projected — accurately or inaccurately — how much they expected to contribute). The EFC is also sent to postsecondary institutions to which the student has sought admission. Each institution "assigns a package of grants, loans and work-study to each admitted student. In March or April, the colleges mail out letters to students that describe their aid packages." Only months before classes start do families learn how much aid they will receive. The authors argue that the "complexity and uncertainty … disproportionately burdens those on the margin of college entry," limiting the influence of aid on college decisions.[67] Citing work by Christopher Avery and Thomas J. Kaine, Dynarski and Scott-Clayton note in a recent study that most Boston high school seniors did not "decide against college," but missed important deadlines or completed paperwork incorrectly. Dynarski and Scott-Clayton add that "backloading" information about the actual price of college increases the likelihood that students will consider college unaffordable, and consequently not even apply for admission, much less apply for financial aid.[68]

In fact, the American Council on Education (ACE) reported in 2006 that between 1999-2000 and 2003-04

> the number of low- and moderate-income undergraduates who *did not* file a FAFSA, and therefore may have missed the opportunity to receive federal, state, and institutional aid to help pay for college, rose from 1.7 million to 1.8 million. … The lowest-income dependent students [dependent students with family incomes below $20,000 and independent students with incomes below $10,000] saw no improvement in their aid application rates, and the lowest-income independent students actually became less likely to have applied for aid (28% did not file a FAFSA in 2003–04, versus 24% in 1999–2000). These students would have likely received aid had they filed an application.

According to ACE, 22% of dependent students with family incomes below $20,000 did not file a FAFSA. An estimated 850,000 students who likely would have been eligible for a Pell grant did not file a FAFSA in 1999-2000; in 2003-04, this increased to 1.5 million likely-eligible grantees who did not submit a FAFSA.[69]

Surprisingly, in a U.S. Department of Education 1995-96 survey of students who did not complete the FAFSA, 28% of lowest-income dependent students and 39% of lowest-income independent students said they didn't apply because they could afford to go to college.[70]

Problem 2: Mistrust, especially among low-income, first-generation and immigrant parents impedes sharing of key information. Additionally, parents of first-generation or low-income students unwittingly can serve as barriers through a refusal to share essential information on financial aid applications. Guidance counselors in the NCES focus groups "gave poignant examples of how many low-income, first-generation and immigrant parents were unwilling to share income tax and Social Security information, essentially preventing their children from applying for and receiving any financial aid and therefore enrolling in college."[71]

Levers for change:

- **Simplify the FAFSA application.** Dynarski and Scott-Clayton suggest that most questions on the FAFSA application could be eliminated "while still maintaining a progressive program *and* without spending more on aid than we do now." They note, however, that the FAFSA could be shortened only by "combining Pell grants and the federal education tax credits into a single, streamlined grant program delivered through the tax system." Dynarski and Scott-Clayton propose three alternative methods that would substantially shorten the application. One approach using "income, assets and family structure" would reduce the number of questions by over 80%, change Pell eligibility by less than $100 for 76% of applicants, and result in increased awards to families with incomes under $30,000. A second method, "using income and family structure, dropping assets," results in a change in Pell grant award for just one in four applicants, with only 13% undergoing a change of 500% or more. Lower-income families would see an average increase in their Pell awards. A third option, "using income and family structure, dropping all assets and dependent students' earnings," would not change the Pell awards of 72% of applicants, and would result in the greatest award increases for students whose parents earn between $15,000 and $40,000 a year. Dynarski and Scott-Clayton add that integrating financial aid eligibility into federal income tax applications not only would save families time but reduce the likelihood of making a mistake on the FAFSA application.[72] Some other mechanism might be considered as an option for families that don't earn enough to file federal taxes.

- **Provide information promptly about the amount of federal aid to be awarded.** Dynarski and Scott-Clayton suggest that families would obtain information on the aid awards they can expect to receive if Pell grants and existing education tax credits (Hope and Lifetime Learning credits) were combined and embedded into the tax system:

  > Families would apply for the grant by checking off a box on their income tax form. Families would receive a voucher, in the mail or electronically, to be applied towards the cost of attendance at any eligible higher education institution. Students would notify schools of their grant eligibility as part of the normal application process. Schools would electronically verify students' enrollment status for the Department of Education, as the Department of Education would verify grant eligibility for schools.[73]

  Integrating the federal financial aid and income tax systems also would "[deliver] funds when they are needed" rather than awarding tax credits 16 months after tuition has been paid.[74]

- **Use means other than federal income tax to determine awards for lowest-income families.** David Longanecker, president of the Western Interstate Compact for Higher Education (WICHE), notes that evaluating eligibility for and administering federal financial aid through the income tax system may not benefit the lowest-income families who do not owe federal tax and therefore do not file a federal income tax form. Longanecker proposes that those eligible for any of several other federal assistance programs — Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), food stamps, and free and reduced lunch — would likely be eligible for the maximum Pell grant. Children in families eligible to receive benefits through these federal programs could automatically receive the maximum Pell grant, while more rigorous assessment of eligibility could be applied to middle- and upper-income families, to ensure that the FAFSA reflects what middle- to higher-SES households are truly able to pay.[75]

- **Launch public awareness campaigns to inform students and families of the need for Social Security and income tax information when completing the FAFSA.** Such campaigns would make patently clear to the public that "nothing bad is going to happen to you" if you provide income tax or Social Security information on a financial aid application.

Some important issues remain, however. Would families be expected to reimburse any funding allocated if their student drops out? Also, how would such a system work for part-time students? Furthermore, Dynarski and Scott-Clayton acknowledge that by integrating the income tax and Pell/education tax credit systems, about 14% of recipients would lose more than $250, while 8% would see more than a $500 decrease in their grant award. They also concede that this unified approach would increase the cost of the program by $2.8 billion, or 18%.[76]

Lack of assistance to students and their families in completing admissions and financial aid procedures

Problem 1: Underserved students lack support. First-generation college students in particular may feel challenged in their ability to successfully complete these applications, and the parents of these students may feel limited in their ability to help their children. A 2001 NCES study of 1992 high school graduates found that among college-qualified high school graduates, 52% reported receiving help from their school on completing college applications, and 33% said their school helped them prepare their admissions essay — but that students whose parents did not go to college were no more likely to receive help than those whose parents had completed a bachelor's degree or higher.[77] A 2007 NCES study based on literature reviews and focus groups of low-income and first-generation college students indicated these students needed resources to help them complete college applications, and their parents offered limited help.[78]

Problem 2: Parents of underserved students expect supports schools do not provide. Low-income students might also be caught between their parents' expectations of the type of assistance the school should provide in applying for college and financial aid, and the ability of schools to meet those expectations. The Bridge Project found in its Illinois case study that "85.2 percent of low-income parents *held schools primarily responsible for college application preparation* compared to 71.4 percent of middle- and 60.5 percent of high-income parents."[79] [emphasis added] However, many schools — and particularly those serving a concentration of low-income students — are unlikely to have the resources to provide substantial assistance to students in completing college application forms. Meanwhile, these low-income students are most likely to be first-generation college-goers and therefore most in need of help in completing admissions and financial aid procedures.

Problem 3: What supports are provided do not meet underserved students' needs. Although their high schools held small-group FAFSA sessions, fewer than one out of 10 students in the University of Southern California survey of low-income Los Angeles juniors and seniors reported attending such sessions. Those students who did attend

> large financial aid events in their area left with many unanswered questions about the FAFSA. Students said their financial situations were too complicated to be handled by the group session presenter at these events. The family income section of the FAFSA was particularly difficult for students with non-traditional families (i.e., a student who lives with a grandparent or sibling, students with divorced or single parents) and required additional assistance to complete. Students who attended the line-by-line workshops said they were not able to complete their FAFSA because they did not know they had to bring the necessary tax information.[80]

Levers for change:

- **Offer personalized guidance to students in completing college admissions and financial aid applications.** According to the **Ohio** College Access Network (OCAN) Web site, most programs provide one-on-one guidance on how to apply for financial aid. Some programs also make available trained OCAN advisors to shepherd students through the college application process.[81] The aforementioned **Texas** Go Centers are staffed with adults trained to help students complete college application and financial aid forms. All Go Centers are to be supplied with computers hooked up to the Internet (to complete online admissions and financial aid forms) as well as preprinted FAFSA, Texas Common Application and community college applications.[82]

- **Simplify state scholarship criteria to make it easier for counselors to help students complete applications.** Research suggests that the simple award criteria in the **Florida** and **Georgia** state merit-based scholarship programs make it easier for counselors to help students complete the related financial aid applications.[83]

"Other" barriers to college entry

While the aforementioned barriers prevent many traditionally underserved students from applying for college admission and/or financial aid, they are by no means the only ones. Policymakers should

consider mitigating or eliminating other economic and policy barriers that thwart successful college entry for underserved and middle-income students alike.

Aspirational, and "Aspirational Plus"

Some traditionally underserved students who might have the capacity to succeed in college may not receive cues from parents, teachers or other adults that they are "college material" and that they should explore postsecondary options. In addition to "Aspirational" programs that may address this need for aspirations-setting, some underserved students may also benefit from "Aspirational Plus" programs that provide clear academic cues and/or financial aid in addition to aspirational supports.

Levers for change:

- **Linking test performance to student advising. Florida** requires all districts to give students the PSAT or PLAN in grade 10. (Parents may exempt their child from participating.) Guidance counselors must use students performance data on PSAT and PLAN to identify students who are prepared to enroll and be successful in Advanced Placement and other advanced courses.[84]

- **Dual enrollment programs tailored to students not planning on going to college. Maine**'s Early College for ME program, administered by the Maine Community College System, provides aspirational, guidance and financial supports to students who have the capacity to succeed in college but have no plans to attend college. High school juniors identified by school staff complete a one-page application on which they must indicate if they would be interested in taking a college course their senior year. Staff help students register for college courses their senior year, help students complete the college application and FAFSA, and provide guidance as students enter and progress through college, serving as "students' first 'go-to' person for as long as they remain in" the program. Students receive Maine community college scholarships for up to $2,000 over two years. The program is currently available in 74 high schools and is hoped to be offered in every high school in the state.[85]

- **Get 'em while they're young.** Some states have developed so-called "early intervention" programs. Such programs invite low- to middle-income students to sign an agreement during the middle grades promising that as long as they maintain a minimum high school GPA, meet high school graduation and college admission requirements, and stay out of trouble with the law, students will be pay no tuition or fees for four years of undergraduate postsecondary education. Such programs include the **Indiana** 21st Century Scholars Program, the **Oklahoma** Higher Learning Access Program (OHLAP) and the **Washington** College Bound Scholarship. The **Wisconsin** Covenant program does not have income eligibility requirements, but does not cover all college tuition costs.

Academic

Students may not have started high school with college aspirations — or might not have realized that one "D" or "F" might negatively impact their ability to get into college. State policies should provide grade forgiveness or credit recovery options for students to clear their academic name, as it were, before applying to college.

Levers for change:

- **Grade forgiveness. Florida** authorizes districts to adopt grade forgiveness policies allowing students to replace a "D" or "F" in a required course with a "C" or higher subsequently earned in the same or comparable course. A "D" or "F" in an elective course also may be replaced with a "C" or higher subsequently earned in another course. In all cases of grade forgiveness, only the new grade may be used in calculating the student's GPA.[86]

- **Credit recovery. Indiana** legislation requires students not making adequate progress towards completing their graduation plan to be informed of credit recovery options.[87] One of the explicit purposes of the **South Carolina** Virtual School is to offer effective credit recovery alternatives.[88] **Florida** requires local boards to establish policies that address credit recovery courses. Courses should be competency based and offered through innovative delivery systems, including computer-assisted instruction. School districts should use learning gains as well as other appropriate data and

provide incentives to identify and reward high-performing teachers who teach credit recovery courses. Districts must also establish policies addressing summer academies offering competency-based credit recovery courses. To support successful implementation at the local level, the state department of education is required to share best practices for providing a complete education program to students enrolled in course recovery and credit recovery programs.[89] **Alabama** state board rules clarify that the credit recovery programs local boards choose to offer must target standards in which a student proved deficient rather than all standards of the original course, and that courses may be offered online, through computer software or through teacher-directed instruction.[90] **Louisiana** allows students who previously failed a course to take a proficiency exam for that course. If districts choose to develop credit recovery programs, they must be competency-based and self-paced. Credit recovery courses must be aligned with state content standards and grade-level expectations.[91]

Financial

State policymakers should be aware of the potential shortcomings of state and federal financial aid policies beyond those raised by a lack of information about financial aid options available to students, complicated federal aid procedures, and a lack of assistance to students and their parents as they seek to complete financial aid applications. Just a sampling of these potential shortcomings are enumerated below.

Inadequacy of Pell and other grants to meet rising college costs. A 2008 report by the Institute for Higher Education Policy notes that Pell grant awards for low-income students left students and their families with substantial remaining costs to cover. While more than half (52%) of all Pell grant recipients had an EFC of zero (demonstrating extreme financial need), the average remaining cost for zero EFC Pell grant awardees approached $5,000 — greater than the $4,500 that the average Pell grant recipient's remaining need.[92] Meanwhile, the College Board's 2007 Trends in Student Aid indicates that between 1996-97 and 2006-07, average increases in grant monies "covered an average of about a third of the increase in private college tuition and fees, and half of the increase in average public four-year college tuition and fees. The average increases in total aid, including both grant aid from all sources and federal loans, covered … almost all of the increase in tuition and fees (*but none of the additional increase in costs of attendance*) at public four-year institutions." (emphasis added)[93]

Inadequacy of grants geared to low-income and first-generation college students to cover room and board. Some "free ride" programs such as the University of Oregon's PathwayOregon program and the University of South Carolina's Gamecock Guarantee cover low-income students' tuition and fees for four years, through a combination of federal, state and institutional financial supports. Programs are designed to offer additional supports through orientation, academic advising, etc. However, because such programs appear not to cover the costs of books, room and board, and other additional college expenses, programs are not a free ride and likely will see limited participation among the targeted audience without consideration of these additional expenses. Institutions should consider emulating programs such as the University of Missouri's program for first-generation college students, Flagship Scholars, which covers room and board, books, and other such expenses. (However, only one scholarship is available per county in three counties at this time.)

Increasing borrowing necessary to cover student costs. National and state reports indicate that loans are a growing source for students to cover the costs of postsecondary education. The College Board's 2007 *Trends in Student Aid* report indicates that "Stagnation in family incomes during a period of rapid escalation in college prices has increased reliance on grants and loans to finance higher education." Between 1996-97 and 2006-07, this translated into a 51% increase in undergraduate federal borrowing, a 20% increase in borrowing through state programs, and a 12% increase in private undergraduate loans.[94] State data paint a similar picture. For example, the Iowa College Student Aid Commission reported in October 2007 that in 2005, loans represented over half — 53.6% — of Iowa students' financial aid, a steady increase since the late 1980s, while scholarships represented just 37.2%.[95] This increased reliance on borrowing to cover college costs will have significant implications in future years as students struggle to pay off loans while seeking to secure adequate employment, become homeowners, etc.

"Sticker shock" and potential implications for Latino student enrollment. Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) typically have significantly lower in-state tuition costs than traditional two- and four-year institutions. The Excelencia in Education study on Latinos' decision on which postsecondary institution to attend suggested that many Latino students who chose to attend HSIs made their decision based on

"sticker price," while Latinos who chose to attend traditional postsecondary institutions evaluated costs after financial aid. "These graduates generally chose the institution where they had the lowest college costs after factoring in the total financial aid offered."[96] When seeking to increase Hispanic postsecondary attendance, both at HSIs and at traditional four- and two-year institutions, decisionmakers should consider policies to keep tuition costs in check and better communicate to Latino families of the actual cost of college after accounting for all available forms of financial aid.

College enrollment is only the beginning

Policies to help students navigate the college admissions and financial aid processes are not the solution to increasing the number of minority and low-income students who *complete* postsecondary degrees. Research and experience suggest that fewer otherwise college-qualified, traditionally underserved students complete a bachelor's degree within six years of postsecondary entry, as opposed to their more-advantaged peers. Furthermore, in *Moving Into Town — and Moving On*, Clifford Adelman notes that just over one out of three (37%) of 1992 high school graduates who started their postsecondary education at a community college and who earned at least 10 credits there had transferred to a four-year college eight years after high school graduation. Of those who transferred, fewer than two out of three (60%) had earned a four-year degree by December 2000.[97] Recent research indicates that state policy and practice help keep such students in college until they complete a degree. These include efforts to: place focus on the freshman year; monitor student progress and provide supports when needed; ensure special programs for at-risk students incorporate best practices identified in the literature; and use data to identify and address weaknesses in programs and systems.[98]

Jennifer Dounay, project manager for ECS' High School Policy Center, can be reached at 303.299.3689 or jdounay@ecs.org

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

Endnotes

[1] Jennifer Dounay, *Alignment of High School Graduation Requirements and State-Set College Admissions Requirements.* [report online] (Denver: Education Commission of the States, 2006, accessed 5 November 2008); available from ECS: http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/68/60/6860.pdf; Internet.
[2] Michael W. Kirst, Andrea Venezia and Anthony Lising Antonio, "What Have We Learned, and Where Do We Go Next," in *From High School to College: Improving Opportunities for Success in Postsecondary Education*, ed. Michael W. Kirst and Andrea Venezia (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 295.
[3] *State of College Readiness for Latino Students.* [report online] (Iowa City: ACT, 2007, accessed 21 August 2008); available from ECS: http://www.ecs.org/ecsmain.asp?page=/html/issue.asp?issueID=48; Internet.
[4] Susan Choy, *Students Whose Parents Did Not Go to College: Postsecondary Access, Persistence, and Attainment.* [report online] (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2001, accessed 5 November 2008); available from NCES: http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/2001126.pdf; Internet.
[5] Jennifer Dounay, *Alignment of High School Graduation Requirements and State-Set College Admissions Requirements.* [report online] (Denver: Education Commission of the States, April 2006, accessed 20 August 2008); available from ECS: http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/68/60/6860.pdf; Internet; OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3313.603
[6] Dounay, *Alignment of High School Graduation Requirements and State-Set College Admissions Requirements.*
[7] 19 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 74.53.
[8] Code Del Regs. 14 505.
[9] MICH. COMP. LAWS 1278a and 1278b.
[10] COLO. REV. STAT. ANN. § 22-30.5-516.
[11] S.D. CODIFIED LAWS § 13-28-50.
[12] TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 33.007, 29.911.
[13] Andrea Venezia, "K-16 Turmoil in Texas," in *From High School to College: Improving Opportunities for Success in Postsecondary Education*, ed. Michael W. Kirst and Andrea Venezia (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 106.
[14] Andrea Conklin Bueschel and Andrea Venezia, "Oregon's K-16 Reforms: A Blueprint for Change?," in *From High School to College: Improving Opportunities for Success in Postsecondary Education.* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 169.

[15] Caroline Sotello Viernes Turner, Lisa M. Jones and James C. Hearn, "Georgia's P-16 Reforms and the Promise of a Seamless System," in *From High School to College: Improving Opportunities for Success in Postsecondary Education.* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 205-206.
[16] Michael W. Kirst, Andrea Venezia, Anthony Lising Antonio., "What Have We Learned, and Where Do We Go Next," in *From High School to College: Improving Opportunities for Success in Postsecondary Education.* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 294.
[17] Susan Choy, *Students Whose Parents Did Not Go to College: Postsecondary Access, Persistence, and Attainment.* [report online] (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2001, accessed 22 August 2008); available from NCES: http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/2001126.pdf; Internet.
[18] South Dakota Board of Regents Web site, accessed 22 August 2008; available from: http://www.sdbor.edu/sdcollegeprep/general/pubs.cfm
[19] TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-49-932.
[20] TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 29.911(b)((2)(C).
[21] Jenny Jackson and Joan Lord, *State Improving ACT and SAT Scores: Making Progress, Facing Challenges.* [report online] (Atlanta: Southern Regional Education Board, 2007, accessed 21 August 2008); available from SREB: http://www.sreb.org/main/Goals/Publications/07E02_ACT_and_SAT_Test_Scores.pdf; Internet.
[22] *The Benefits of Statewide Use of the ACT Test.* [report online] (Iowa City: ACT, 2006, accessed 21 August 2008); available from ACT: http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/statewide.pdf; Internet.
[23] Achieve, Inc., *Aligned Expectations? A Closer Look at College Admissions and Placement Tests.* [report online] (Washington, D.C.: Achieve, Inc., April 2007, accessed 21 August 2008); available from Achieve: http://www.achieve.org/files/Admissions_and_Placement_FINAL2.pdf; Internet.
[24] Keith MacAllum, Denise M. Glover, Barbara Queen, and Angela Riggs, *Deciding on Postsecondary Education: Final Report.* [report online] (Washington, D.C.: National Postsecondary Education Collaborative, December 2007, accessed 22 August 2008); available from NCES: http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2008/2008850.pdf; Internet.
[25] TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 51.3062(q), 39.0233(a), 28.014, 39.023, 39.0232.
[26] COLO. REV. STAT. ANN. § 22-7-1001 through -1019, 23-1-113(a) through (c).
[27] Achieve, Inc., 4, 36.
[28] MacAllum, Glover, Queen, and Riggs, 20.
[29] Laura W. Perna, Heather T. Rowan-Kenyon, Scott L. Thomas, Angela Bell, Robert Anderson and Chunyan Li, *The Review of Higher Education*, Winter 2008, Volume 31, No. 2, pp. 131-159.
[30] E-mail communication with David Hawkins, National Association for College Admission Counseling, August 22, 2008; "Colleges and Universities Offering Graduate Coursework in College Admission Counseling," National Association for College Admission Counseling.
[31] David A. Hawkins and Melissa Clinedinst, *State of College Admission 2007*. (Alexandria: National Association for College Admission Counseling, August 2007), 53.
[32] David A. Hawkins and Melissa Clinedinst, *State of College Admission 2006.* [report online] (Alexandria: National Association for College Admission Counseling, 2006, accessed 22 August 2008); available from NACAC: http://www.nacacnet.org/NR/rdonlyres/4B4C0DF4-BF0A-4B10-89F4 A3D631061305/0/06StateofCollegeAdmissionpdf.pdf; Internet.
[33] Perna, Rowan-Kenyon, Thomas, Bell, Anderson and Chunyan Li, 147
[34] Patricia M. McDonough, "Counseling Matters: Knowledge, Assistance, and Organizational Commitment in College Preparation," in *Preparing for College: Nine Elements of Effective Outreach*, ed. William G. Tierney, Zoë B. Corwin and Julia E. Colyar (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), 72.
[35] COLO. REV. STAT. ANN. § 22-91-101 through -105.
[36] *ibid.*
[37] Jennifer Dounay, *The Progress of Education Reform* vol. 9, no. 3, (2008): 1-6. http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/67/10/6710.pdf
[38] Perna, Rowan-Kenyon, Thomas, Bell, Anderson and Li, 152.
[39] Mari Luna De La Rosa and William G. Tierney, *Breaking Through the Barriers to College: Empowering Low-Income Communities, Schools, and Families for College Opportunity and Student Financial Aid.* [report online] (Los Angeles: Center for Higher Education Policy Analysis, University of Southern California, 2006, accessed 25 August 2008); available from CHEPA: http://www.usc.edu/dept/chepa/pdf/Breaking%20through%20Barriers%20final.pdf; Internet.
[40] Kirst, Venezia and Antonio, 293.
[41] Betty Merchant, "Roadblocks to Effective K-16 Reform in Illinois," in *From High School to College: Improving Opportunities for Success in Postsecondary Education.* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 144; Conklin Bueschel and Venezia, 172-173.
[42] Betty Merchant, 145.
[43] Cabrera, A.F., & La Nasa, S.M. « Understanding the College-Choice Process," in A.F. Cabrera and S.M. La Nasa (Ed.), *Understanding the College Choice of Disadvantaged Students* (5-22). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2000.
[44] Choy, S.P., Horn, L.J., Nuñez, A.-M. and Chen, X. "Transition to College: What Helps At-Risk Students and Students Whose Parents Did Not Attend College," in A.F. Cabrera & S.M. La Nasa (Eds.), *Understanding the College Choice of Disadvantaged Students* (45-63). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2000.
[45] Deborah A. Santiago, *Choosing Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs): A Closer Look at Latino Students' College Choices.* [report online] (Washington, D.C.: Excelencia in Education, August 2007, accessed 25 August 2008);

available from Excelencia in Education: http://www.edexcelencia.org/pdf/ChoosingHSIsCloserLookFINAL.pdf; Internet.
[46] Clifford Adelman, "How to Design a Web Site That Welcomes Prospective Students," in *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 27 October 2006, vol. 53, issue 10, B26.
[47] Anthony Lising Antonio and Samuel H. Bersola, "Working Toward K-16 Coherence in California," in *From High School to College: Improving Opportunities for Success in Postsecondary Education.* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 56-58, 71.
[48] Merchant, 133.
[49] *ibid.*, 146.
[50] Andrea Conklin Bueschel, "The Missing Link: The Role of Community Colleges in the Transition Between High School and College," in *From High School to College: Improving Opportunities for Success in Postsecondary Education.* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 267.
[51] Antonio and Bersola, 68-69; Merchant, 139; Heinrich Mintrop, Toby H. Milton, Frank A. Schmidtlein and Ann Merck MacLellan, "K-16 Reform in Maryland," in *From High School to College: Improving Opportunities for Success in Postsecondary Education.* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 237.
[52] Perna, Rowan-Kenyon, Thomas, Bell, Anderson and Li, 145-147.
[53] De La Rosa and Tierney, 9.
[54] South Dakota Board of Regents Web site, accessed 25 August 2008; available from: http://www.sdbor.edu/sdcollegeprep/general/pubs.cfm
[55] TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 29.911(b)(4), 33.007(b)(4).
[56] MacAllum, Glover, Queen, and Riggs, 34.
[57] TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 33.007(b)(6); 19 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 61.1071.
[58] OR. REV. STAT. § 348.500; ASPIRE Web site, accessed 25 August 2008; available at http://www.aspireoregon.org/
[59] Ohio College Access Network Web site, accessed 25 August 2008; available at: http://www.kwfdn.org/accessing_college/ocan/work/
[60] Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, *Go Center Manual*, accessed 27 August 2008; available at: http://techpreprgv.com/data/gocenters/Manualforschools.pdf
[61] AT&T, "Mobile Go Center Makes Debut in Fort Worth to Help Close Gap in College Participation," October 10, 2006; accessed 27 August 2008: http://www.att.com/gen/press-room?pid=4800&cdvn=news&newsarticleid=22888; USTA Today, "Mobile Go Center to help close education gaps," May 17, 2006, accessed 27 August 2008; available at: http://www.utsa.edu/today/2006/05/gocenter.cfm
[62] *Go Center Manual*, 6-7.
[63] Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government Accountability, "Postsecondary Student Use of the Florida Academic Counseling and Tracking for Students {FACTS) Is Low," Report No. 08-25, (2008): 1-12.
[64] ApplyTexas Web site, accessed 22 August 2008; available at: https://www.applytexas.org/adappc/gen/c_start.WBX; "The Texas Common Application," posted to the 2008 High School Graduate Web site, accessed 22 August 2008; available at: http://www.thehighschoolgraduate.com/editorial/DF/TCA.htm
[65] ECS database, "State Requires or Authorizes the Use of E-Transcripts," accessed 22 August 2008; available at: http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=1636
[66] Indiana e-Transcript Web page for counselors, accessed 18 November 2008; available from http://www.learnmoreindiana.org/counselors/highschool/AcademicGuidance/Pages/Indiana_e-Transcript.aspx
[67] Susan M. Dynarski and Judith E. Scott-Clayton, *The Feasibility of Delivering Aid for College Through the Tax System.* [report online] (Cambridge: Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government, 2006, accessed 11 October 2007); available from the U.S. Senate: http://www.senate.gov/~finance/hearings/testimony/2005test/120506sdtesta.pdf; Internet; Susan M. Dynarski and Judith E. Scott-Clayton, *The Feasibility of Streamlining Aid for College Using the Tax System*. [report online] Cambridge: Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government, 2007, accessed 26 August 2008; available from Harvard: http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~jclayton/files/DynarskiScottClayton_Feasibility_NTAPP.pdf; Internet.
[68] Dynarski and Scott-Clayton, 2007, 6.
[69] American Council on Education, *Missed Opportunities Revisited: New Information on Students Who Do Not Apply for Financial Aid.* [report online] (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, February 2006, accessed 22 August 2008); available from ACE: http://www.acenet.edu/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=14244; Internet.
[70] *ibid.*
[71] MacAllum, Glover, Queen, and Riggs, 37.
[72] Dynarski and Scott-Clayton, 2007, 7-11, 16.
[73] *ibid.*, 12-13.
[74] *ibid.*, 14.
[75] Conversation with David Longanecker, August 26, 2008.
[76] Dynarski and Scott-Clayton, 14.
[77] Choy, 17.
[78] MacAllum, Glover, Queen and Riggs, *v*.
[79] Merchant, 140.

[80] De La Rosa and Tierney, 12.
[81] Ohio College Access Network Web site, accessed 26 August 2008; available at: http://www.kwfdn.org/accessing_college/ocan/work/
[82] *Go Center Manual*, 6-7.
[83] Perna, Rowan-Kenyon, Thomas, Bell, Anderson and Li, 146.
[84] FLA. STAT. ANN. § 1007.35.
[85] Early College for ME Web site, accessed 26 August 2008; available from: http://www.earlycollege.me.edu/index.html
[86] FLA. STAT. ANN. § 1003.413(3)(e), 1003.428(4), 1003.43(5)(e)(1).
[87] IND. CODE ANN. § 20-30-4-6.
[88] S.C. CODE ANN. § 59-16-10(A)(2) and 59-16-15(A).
[89] FLA. STAT. ANN. § 1003.413(3)(d) and (f), (4)(c).
[90] ALA. ADMIN. CODE R. 290-3-1-.02(10).
[91] LA. ADMIN. CODE tit. 28, § 2323 and 2324.
[92] Courtney McSwain, *Window of Opportunity: Targeting Federal Grant Aid to Students with the Lowest Incomes.* [report online] (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Higher Education Policy, February 2008, accessed 27 August 2008); available from IHEP: http://www.ihep.org/assets/files/publications/s-z/Window_of_Opportunity.pdf; Internet.
[93] College Board, *Trends in Student Aid 2007.* (Washington, D.C.: College Board, 2007), 23.
[94] College Board, 23, 2.
[95] Keith Greiner, *Student Loan Debt: Trends Affecting the American Dream* . [report online] (Des Moines: Iowa College Student Aid Commission, October 2007, accessed 27 August 2008); available from ICSAC: http://www.iowacollegeaid.gov/docs/file/research/studentloandebt.pdf; Internet.
[96] Santiago, 8-9.
[97] Clifford Adelman, *Moving Into Town — and Moving On: The Community College in the Lives of Traditional-age Students.* [report online] (Washington, D.C.: Office of Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education, February 2005, accessed 28 August 2008); available from the U.S. Department of Education: http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/comcollege/movingintotown.pdf; Internet.
[98] Jennifer Engle and Colleen O'Brien, *Demography Is Not Destiny: Increasing the Graduation Rates of Low-Income College Students at Large Public Universities.* [report online] (Washington, D.C.: The Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education, 2007, accessed 25 August 2008); available from the Pell Institute: http://www.pellinstitute.org/files/files-demography_is_not_destiny.pdf; Internet.

Tools & Resources

High School

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 810 • Denver, CO 80203-3442 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

High School Agenda: Who's Doing What

May 2008

This document provides information on the projects, initiatives and products of ECS and other national education and policy organizations on the subject of high school improvement. It is designed to direct policymakers to various groups and resources that might be useful in developing and implementing effective high school policy, and highlight important resources for anyone concerned with improving high schools. This May 2008 document reflects high school-focused reports published since spring 2005 and updates the May 2005 version of this document (see http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/61/08/6108.pdf).

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
Education Commission of the States (ECS) 700 Broadway, Suite 810 Denver, CO 80203 303.299.3600 www.ecs.org	ECS is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization created by an interstate compact. ECS conducts research and policy analysis on a broad range of state-level education issues. The organization contains the High School Policy Center that focuses on issues related to secondary school education and reform.	**Projects:** **50-State Policy Database** that is searchable by year, state and topic (1994-present): http://www.ecs.org/ecsmain.asp?page=/html/statesTerritories/state_policy_developments.htm In early 2005, ECS launched a three-year scope of work under the umbrella of the **ECS High School Policy Center (HSPC)**. The HSPC is focusing its efforts on the following: • An extensive 50-state high school policy database, including the following: Advanced Placement, College-Ready Standards, Exit Exams, Graduation Rates, Graduation Requirements, High School/College Alignment, High School-Level Accountability, High School-Level Assessment, Highlights of Local Initiatives, International Baccalaureate, Special Populations in High School Assessments, State Data Systems, Student Accountability, Student Support and Remediation, and Virtual High Schools. These databases will be updated as new policies and programs are enacted. As well, ECS will be expanding the scope of the database

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		as the project continues. • A searchable database of high school research. This database provides users with short, jargon-free summaries of vetted research on specific topics related to high school reform. Users may access summaries of individual research studies, view multiple summaries sorted by issue, date, author, publication, or author's organization, or view research studies aimed at answering a specific policy question. • ECS high school issue site. This site, which is updated regularly, contains information on what states are doing in regard to high schools, selected research and readings, links to related issues, and information on numerous sub-issues, including advanced placement, dropout rates/graduation rates, exit exams, early/middle colleges, GED (General Educational Development) and graduation requirements. **Publications:** *Issues in Funding Early & Middle College High Schools* (March 2008) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/77/72/7772.pdf *The Progress of Education Reform 2007: Dropout Prevention* (August 2007) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/75/33/7533.pdf *Student Accountability Initiatives* (August 2007) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/75/38/7538.pdf *Accommodations for English Language Learners in State Assessments* (July 2007) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/73/86/7386.pdf *Sanctions on Driving Privileges* (July 2007) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/60/10/6010.pdf *Compulsory School Age Requirements* (July 2007) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/64/07/6407.pdf *School Attendance Age Limits* (June 2007) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/74/74/7474.pdf *Aligned to the Research: Science and Mathematics Graduation Requirements* (June 2007) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/74/52/7452.pdf *What Policymakers Need to Know About the Cost of Implementing Lab-Based Science Course Requirements* (June 2007)

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/74/64/7464.pdf *The State Role in Accelerating Student Growth in Low-Performing High Schools* (May 2007) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/74/66/7466.pdf *High School Level-Assessments: Purpose(s) of Exams* (April 2007) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/73/10/7310.pdf *High School Level-Assessments: Subjects Tested* (April 2007) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/73/11/7311.pdf *Helping Equip Teachers to Answer Students' Questions on College Knowledge* (April 2007) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/73/72/7372.pdf *Recent State STEM Initiatives* (March 2007) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/70/72/7072.pdf *The Progress of Education Reform 2006: Mentoring* (September 2006) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/70/94/7094.pdf *Science and Math Graduation Requirements: Classes of 2006 through 2011* (August 2006) Math: http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/67/07/6707.pdf Science: http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/67/08/6708.pdf *Involving Families in High School and College Expectations* (August 2006) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/70/37/7037.pdf *Mathematics and Science Education in the States* (July 2006) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/68/73/6873.pdf *P-16 Collaboration in the States* (June 2006) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/69/26/6926.pdf *Alignment of High School Graduation Requirements and State-Set College Admissions* (April 2006) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/68/60/6860.pdf *Embedding College Readiness Indicators in High School Curriculum and Assessments* (April 2006) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/68/55/6855.pdf *The Progress of P-16 Collaboration in the States* (April 2006) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/68/71/6871.pdf

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Dual Enrollment: Policy Issues Confronting State Policymakers (March 2006) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/67/87/6787.pdf *Advanced Placement* (February 2006) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/67/44/6744.pdf *Ensuring Rigor in the High School Curriculum: What States Are Doing* (January 2006) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/66/67/6667.pdf *The Progress of Education Reform 2006: Technology in Education* (January 2006) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/67/10/6710.pdf *State Policies Related to Alternative Education* (November 2005) http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/65/77/6577.pdf
Academic Pathways to Student Success (APASS) University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign 51 Gerty Drive, 129 CRC Champaign, IL 61820 217.244.9390 Email: apass-info@uiuc.edu www.apass.uiuc.edu/APASS	APASS is a project with the University of Illinois that identifies and disseminates information about new and emerging academic pathways from high school to college with a focus on underserved students.	**Projects:** Internet site with 50-state databases with profiles of each state's academic pathways. http://www.apass.uiuc.edu/states/ **Publications:** *How Three Disparate States Seek to Connect K-12 to College to Enhance Student Access and Success* (2006) http://www.apass.uiuc.edu/publications/AERA%20APASS%20040506_Kim%20&%20Bragg.pdf *Academic Pathways to College: Policies and Practices of the Fifty States to Reach Underserved Students* (2005) http://www.apass.uiuc.edu/publications/ASHE2005%20APASS%20paper.pdf *Dual Credit and Dual Enrollment* (2005) http://www.apass.uiuc.edu/publications/Dual%20Credit%20Enrollment%20w-Header.pdf *Middle College and Early College High Schools* (2005) http://www.apass.uiuc.edu/publications/Middle%20College%20or%20Early%20College%20High%20Schools%20w-header.pdf *Tech Prep and Related Career Pathways* (2005) http://www.apass.uiuc.edu/publications/TP%20Career%20Pathways%20w-Header.pdf

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
Achieve, Inc. 1775 Eye Street NW, Suite 410 Washington, DC 20006 202.419.1540 www.achieve.org	Achieve, Inc., is a non-profit, bipartisan organization that focuses on academic standards, assessment and accountability. Achieve has partnered with various states to provide assistance with benchmarking their academic standards, assessments and accountability systems.	**Projects:** **American Diploma Project:** The American Diploma Project (ADP) is a network of 33 states that are focusing on establishing links between high school expectations and post-graduation demands. The project includes an internet site with review of each participating state's action plan. **Publications:** *Closing the Expectations Gap 2008* (February 2008) http://www.achieve.org/files/50-state-2008-final02-25-08.pdf *The Perkins Act of 2006: Connecting Career and Technical Education with the College and Career Readiness Agenda* (January 2008) http://www.achieve.org/files/Achieve-CTEPolicyBrief-02-07-08.pdf *Aligning High School Graduation Requirements with the Real World: A Road Map for States* (December 2007) http://www.achieve.org/files/Achieve_PolicyBrief_Dec18v3.pdf *Moving North Carolina Forward: High Standards and High Graduation Rates* (August 2007) http://www.achieve.org/files/MovingNCForward.pdf *High Standards and High Graduation Rates: Moving Forward on a Dual Agenda in Massachusetts* (April 2007) http://www.achieve.org/files/MassRpttFINAL0417.pdf *Closing the Expectations Gap 2007* (April 2007) http://www.achieve.org/files/50-state-07-Final.pdf *Aligned Expectations? A Closer Look at College Admissions and Placement Tests* (April 2007) http://www.achieve.org/files/Admissions_and_Placement_FINAL2.pdf *Creating a World-Class Education System in Ohio* (February 2007) http://www.achieve.org/files/World_Class_Edu_Ohio_FINAL.pdf *Moving Indiana Forward: High Standards and High Graduation Rates* (November 2006) http://www.achieve.org/files/Indiana-report.pdf *An Alignment Analysis of Washington State's College Readiness Mathematics Standards With*

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Various Local Placement Tests (June 2006) http://www.achieve.org/files/WA_Align_Analysis_Math_Stds_06-2006.pdf *Identifying Potential Dropouts* (June 2006) http://www.achieve.org/files/FINAL-dropouts_0.pdf *Closing the Expectations Gap 2006* (February 2006) http://www.achieve.org/files/50-state-06-Final.pdf *Measuring What Matters: Creating a Longitudinal Data System To Improve Student Achievement* (November 2005) http://www.achieve.org/files/DQC_paper_0.pdf
Alliance for Excellent Education 1201 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 901 Washington, DC 20036 202.828.0828 http://www.all4ed.org/	The Alliance for Excellent Education is a nationwide policy and advocacy organization that focuses on high school reform and student achievement by advocating for the development and implementation of policies on the national and federal level.	**Projects:** **Campaign for High School Equity:** The Campaign for High School Equity is a coalition of national organizations working from the premise that high schools should have the capacity to prepare every student. The Alliance for Excellent Education serves as the convener and coordinator for the campaign. The goal of the campaign is to provide unique perspectives of policy issues critical to high school reform, to educate communities about the need for reform and to engage in advocacy to produce positive outcomes for students of color and low-income students. **Publications:** *Straight A's: Public Education Policy and Progress* (biweekly newsletter) http://www.all4ed.org/publication_material/straight_as *State Cards* (February 2008) http://www.all4ed.org/about_the_crisis/schools/state_cards *What Keeps Good Teachers in the Classroom? Understanding and Reducing Teacher Turnover* (February 2008) http://www.all4ed.org/files/TeachTurn.pdf *Understanding High School Graduation Rates* (January 2008) http://www.all4ed.org/publication_material/understanding_HSgradrates *In Need of Improvement: NCLB and High Schools* (November 2007) http://www.all4ed.org/publications/NCLB_HighSchools.pdf

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Fourth Annual High School Policy Conference (October 2007) http://www.all4ed.org/events/fourth_HSpolicyconference_agenda *The High Cost of High School Dropouts: What the Nation Pays for Inadequate High Schools* (October 2007) http://www.all4ed.org/publications/HighCost.pdf *High School Teaching for the Twenty-First Century: Preparing Students for College* (September 2007) http://www.all4ed.org/files/HSTeach21st.pdf *High School Dropouts in America* (September 2007) http://www.all4ed.org/files/GraduationRates_FactSheet.pdf *Asian Pacific Islander American Students and U.S. High Schools* (September 2007) http://www.all4ed.org/files/AsianPacific_FactSheet.pdf *International Comparisons of Academic Achievement* (September 2007) http://www.all4ed.org/files/IntlComp_FactSheet.pdf *American Indian and Alaska Native Students and U.S. High Schools* (September 2007) http://www.all4ed.org/files/AmerIndianAKNative_FactSheet.pdf *Literacy Instruction in the Content Areas: Getting to the Core of Middle and High School Improvement* (June 2007) http://www.all4ed.org/publications/LiteracyContent/LitCon.pdf *Federal Support for Adolescent Literacy: A Solid Investment* (June 2007) http://www.all4ed.org/files/FedAdLit.pdf *African-American Students and U.S. High Schools* (April 2007) http://www.all4ed.org/files/AfAm_FactSheet.pdf *Latino Students and U.S. High Schools* (April 2007) http://www.all4ed.org/files/Latino_FactSheet.pdf *Making Writing Instruction a Priority in America's Middle and High Schools* (April 2007) http://www.all4ed.org/publications/WritPrior.pdf *Hidden Benefits: The Impact of High School Graduation on Household Wealth* (February 2007) http://www.all4ed.org/publications/hiddenbenefits.pdf

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Urgent but Overlooked: The Literacy Crisis Among Adolescent English Language Learners (February 2007) http://www.all4ed.org/files/UrgentOver.pdf *Healthier and Wealthier: Decreasing Health Care Costs by Increasing Educational Attainment* (November 2006) http://www.all4ed.org/files/HandW.pdf *Double the Work: Challenges and Solutions to Acquiring Language and Academic Literacy for Adolescent English Language Learners* (November 2006) http://www.all4ed.org/files/archive/publications/DoubleWork/DoubleWork.pdf *Demography as Destiny: How America Can Build a Better Future* (October 2006) http://www.all4ed.org/files/demography.pdf *Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High Schools* (October 2006) http://www.all4ed.org/publications/WritingNext/WritingNext.pdf *Paying Double: Inadequate High Schools and Community College Remediation* (August 2006) http://www.all4ed.org/publications/remediation.pdf *Teacher Attrition: A Costly Loss to the Nation and to States* (August 2006) http://www.all4ed.org/files/TeacherAttrition.pdf *Saving Futures, Saving Dollars: The Impact of Education on Crime Reduction and Earnings* (August 2006) http://www.all4ed.org/files/SavingFutures.pdf *Who's Counted? Who's Counting? Understanding High School Graduation Rates* (June 2006) http://www.all4ed.org/publications/WhosCounting/WhosCounting.pdf *Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy, a report to Carnegie Corporation of New York* (June 2006) http://www.all4ed.org/publications/ReadingNext/ReadingNext.pdf *Why the Crisis in Adolescent Literacy Demands a National Response* (June 2006) http://www.all4ed.org/files/archive/publications/StrivingBrief3_numbers_02.pdf *Reading and Writing in the Academic Content Areas* (June 2006)

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		http://www.all4ed.org/files/ReadingWritingAcadContent.pdf *Adolescent Literacy* (February 2006) http://www.all4ed.org/files/AdolescentLiteracyFactSheet.pdf *Finding and Keeping the Teachers We Need* (February 2006) http://www.all4ed.org/files/TeacherQualityFactSheet.pdf
American College Testing (ACT) 500 ACT Drive P.O. Box 168 Iowa City, IA 52243-0168 319.337.1000 www.act.org	ACT is a nonprofit organization that provides information and services in assessment, research and program management. ACT designs and develops assessment programs and provides psychometric and statistical support for ACT programs.	**Publications:** *Using Hierarchical Modeling to Examine Course Work and ACT Score Relationships Across High Schools* (July 2007) http://www.act.org/research/researchers/reports/pdf/ACT_RR2007-2.pdf *Rigor at Risk* (May 2007) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/rigor_report.pdf *ACT National Curriculum Survey® 2005–2006* (April 2007) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/NationalCurriculumSurvey2006.pdf *Using EPAS™ to Evaluate School-Based Intervention Programs: GEAR UP* (2007) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/gearup_study.pdf *Using EXPLORE® and PLAN® Data to Evaluate GEAR UP Programs* (2007) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/gearup_report.pdf *Aligning Postsecondary Expectations and High School Practice: The Gap Defined* (2007) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/NCSPolicyBrief.pdf *Setting Students' Sights on College: Chicago Public Schools* (2007) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/cps.pdf *Ready for College and Ready for Work: Same or Different?* (May 2006) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/ReadinessBrief.pdf *Reading Between the Lines* (March 2006) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/reading_report.pdf *Developing the STEM Education Pipeline* (2006) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/ACT_STEM_PolicyRpt.pdf

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Statewide Administration of the ACT: A Key Component in Improving Student Preparation for College and Work (2006) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/coil_benefits.pdf *Ready to Succeed: All Students Prepared for College and Work* (2006) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/ready_to_succeed.pdf *EPAS®: A System that Works* (2006) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/epas_works.pdf *The Benefits of Statewide Use of the ACT® Test* (2006) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/statewide.pdf *Benefits of a High School Core Curriculum* (2006) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/core_curriculum.pdf *Breaking Barriers: A Case Study of Two High-Performing Schools* (2006) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/breaking_barriers.pdf *Are High School Grades Inflated?* (2005) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/issues.pdf *Courses Count: Preparing Students for Postsecondary Access* (2005) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/CoursesCount.pdf *Do Current State Standards and Assessments Reflect College Readiness?: A Case Study* (2005) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/current_standards.pdf *Early College Planning Pays Big Dividends: Louisiana* (2005) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/la.pdf *Gender Fairness Using the ACT* (2005) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/gender.pdf *Incorporating ACT Scores into Your Statewide Assessment* (2005) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/incorporating_act_scores.pdf *The Sensitivity of the ACT to Instruction* (2005) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/2004-3.pdf

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Using PLAN to Identify Student Readiness for Advanced Courses in High School (2005) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/using_plan.pdf *What Are ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks?* (2005) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/benchmarks.pdf *On Course for Success: A Close Look at Selected High School Courses That Prepare All Students for College and Work* (2005) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/success_report.pdf
American Institutes for Research (AIR) 1000 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW Washington, DC 20007 202.403.5000 www.air.org	AIR is a behavioral and social science research organization that has program focuses such as education assessment and education and human development. Practice areas include school reform, literacy, finance and state-level testing.	**Projects:** **National High School Center** (www.betterhighschools.org)**:** The National High School Center is a resource network for practitioners, researchers, and policymakers to meet the needs of high school students. The High School Center has a special focus on students with disabilities, students with limited proficiency in English, students at risk of school failure. The NHSC reviews literature on dropout prevention, high school transition (from middle grades to grade 9, and from high school to postsecondary), restructuring high schools, adolescent literacy, high school curriculum and instruction, high school assessment and data systems. NHSC also provides technical assistance to the federal regional comprehensive centers, and offers webinars and summer institutes. **Publications include:** *Approaches to Dropout Prevention: Heeding Early Warning Signs with Appropriate Interventions* (October 2007) http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_ApproachestoDropoutPrevention.pdf *Transitioning Out of High School: A Quick Stats Fact Sheet* (October 2007) http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_TransitionsOutFactSheet.pdf *State-Level High School Improvement Systems Survey Checklist* (September 2007) http://www.betterhighschools.org/documents/StateLevelHSImprovSystemsSurvey100407.pdf *High School Dropout: A Quick Stats Fact Sheet* (September 2007) http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_DropoutFactSheet.pdf *State Approaches to More Reliable and Uniform Dropout and Graduation Data* (August 2007) http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_GradRatesvsDropoutRates_August2007.pdf *Meeting the Needs of Significantly Struggling Learners in High School: A Look at Approaches to Tiered Intervention* (August 2007)

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_RTIBrief_08-02-07.pdf *Easing the Transition to High School: Research and Best Practices Designed to Support High School Learning* (July 2007) http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_TransitionsReport.pdf *Managing the Transition to High School in a Comprehensive Urban High School* (May 2007) http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_Snapshot_EdisonAcademy.pdf *State and District-Level Support for Successful Transitions into High School* (May 2007) http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_PolicyBrief_TransitionsIntoHighSchool.pdf *Dropout Prevention for Students with Disabilities: A Critical Issue for State Education Agencies* (May 2007) http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_DropoutPrevention_052507.pdf *Toward Ensuring a Successful Transition into High School* (May 2007) http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_TowardEnsuring_051607.pdf *The First Year of High School: A Quick Stats Fact Sheet* (March 2007) http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_FirstYearofHighSchool_032807_000.pdf *Findings from the Early College High School Initiative: A Look at Best Practices and Lessons Learned Regarding a Dual Enrollment Program* (March 2007) http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_EarlyCollegeHighSchool_032107.pdf *New Hampshire's Multi-Tiered Approach to Dropout Prevention* (March 2007) http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/Snapshot_DropoutPreventionNewHampshire_031307_2.pdf *States' Progress Toward High School Restructuring* (January 2007) http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_Restructuring_1-19-07.pdf *Improving Literacy Outcomes for English Language Learners in High School: Considerations for States and Districts in Developing a Coherent Policy Framework* (November 2006) http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_AdolescentS_110806.pdf *Emerging Evidence on Improving High School Student Achievement and Graduation Rates: The Effects of Four Popular Improvement Programs* (November 2006) http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_EmergingEvidence_010907.pdf *Report on Key Practices and Policies of Consistently Higher Performing High Schools* (October

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		2006) http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/ReportOfKeyPracticesandPolicies_10-31-06.pdf *Sustaining Focus on Secondary School Reading: Lessons and Recommendations from the Alabama Reading Initiative* (September 2006) http://www.betterhighschools.org/pubs/documents/NHSC_ARI_ResearchBrief_092906.pdf *At a Glance: NCLB and High Schools* (August 2006) http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NCLBandHighSchools_PolicyBrief_090806.pdf *High Schools in the U.S.* (August 2006) http://www.betterhighschools.org/pubs/documents/USFactSheetandReferences_FINAL_080406.pdf *High School Students by Region and State* (July 2006) http://www.betterhighschools.org/pubs/documents/NHSC_HighSchoolStudentsbyRegionState_073106.pdf **Schools for a New Society Initiative:** Sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation in seven urban communities across the nation, the initiative is designed to strengthen urban high schools through partnerships between districts and significant community-based change agents, redesign of the district role and relationship to schools, and restructured high schools. **National Evaluation of the Early College High School Initiative:** The initiative is a seven-year evaluation of the Gate's Foundation's early college high school initiative (created to fund intermediary organizations establishing early college high schools). **National Evaluation of High School Transformation:** The initiative is a multi-year evaluation of the Gate's Foundation's national school networks grants, national districts grants, technical assistance grants, and assessment development grants programs. **Ohio School Transformation Initiative:** The initiative is a multi-year evaluation of the Ohio School Transformation Initiative funded through the KnowledgeWorks Foundation. The initiative seeks to transform large urban schools in the state into smaller learning communities.
American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF) 1836 Jefferson Place NW Washington DC 20036 202.775.9731	AYPF is a nonprofit organization that addresses youth and education issues on the national, state and local levels. The	**Publications:** *Lessons Learned from Forum Series on High School Reform funded by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation* (September 2007) http://www.aypf.org/projects/briefs/HSReformLessonLearned.pdf

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
Email: aypf@aypf.org www.aypf.org	organization focuses on three main themes: education, youth development and community involvement and preparation for careers and workforce development.	*The College Ladder: Linking Secondary and Postsecondary Education for Success for All Students* (September 2006) http://www.aypf.org/publications/The%20College%20Ladder/TheCollegeLadderlinkingsecondaryandpostsecondaryeducation.pdf *Federal, State, and Local Roles Supporting Alternative Education* (June 2006) http://www.aypf.org/publications/AlternativeEducation2006.pdf *Helping Youth Succeed Through Out-of-School Time Programs* (January 2006) http://www.aypf.org/publications/HelpingYouthOST2006.pdf *Preparing Youth for Careers, Lifelong Learning, and Civic* Participation (2006) http://www.aypf.org/publications/PrearingYouthforCareersLifelongLearningandCivicParticipation.pdf *Whatever It Takes: How Twelve Communities Are Reconnecting Out-of-School Youth* (2006) http://www.aypf.org/publications/WhateverItTakes/WITfull.pdf *Enhancing High School Reform: Lessons From Site Visits to Four Cities* (November 2005) http://www.aypf.org/publications/EnhancingHSReform.pdf *The Link Between High School Reform and College Access and Success for Low-Income and Minority Youth* (2005) http://www.aypf.org/publications/HSReformCollegeAccessandSuccess.pdf *Restoring the Balance Between Academics and Civic Education in Public Schools* (2005) http://www.aypf.org/publications/Restoring%20the%20Balance%20Report.pdf
The Aspen Institute One Dupont Circle, NW Suite 700 Washington, DC 20036 202.736.5800 www.aspeninstitute.org	The Aspen Institute is a nonprofit organization that focuses on issues both domestic and international. Policy work on education includes high school reform and leadership.	**Publications:** *Transforming High School Teaching and Learning: A District-Wide Design* (May 2006) http://www.aspeninstitute.org/atf/cf/%7BDEB6F227-659B-4EC8-8F84-8DF23CA704F5%7D/EDUCATIONTRANSFORMING_HIGH_SCHOOL_TEACHING_AND_LEARNING_A_DISTRICT_WIDE_DESIGN.PDF *Remaking Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century: What Role for High School Programs?* (April 2005) http://www.aspeninstitute.org/atf/cf/%7BDEB6F227-659B-4EC8-8F84-8DF23CA704F5%7D/ed_kazis-RemakingCTE.pdf

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University Box 1985 Providence, RI 02912 401.863.7990 Email: AISR_Info@brown.edu www.annenberginstitute.org	The Annenberg Institute for School Reform is an independent center based at Brown University. The institute conducts research in the areas of system redesign, community involvement and data-informed decisionmaking.	**Publications:** *Beating the Odds: How Thirteen NYC Schools Bring Low-Performing Ninth-Graders to Timely Graduation and College Enrollment* (December 2007) http://www.annenberginstitute.org/pdf/BTO_report.pdf *Coaches in the High School Classroom: Studies in Implementing High School Reform* (March 2005) http://www.annenberginstitute.org/pdf/Coaches_SNS.pdf *From Data to Decisions: Lessons from School Districts Using Data Warehousing* (January 2005) http://www.annenberginstitute.org/pdf/DataWarehousing.pdf
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation P.O. Box 23350 Seattle, WA 98102 206.709.3100 Email: info@gatesfoundation.org www.gatesfoundation.org	The Gates Foundation's emphasis on education includes high school graduation and student success in college and the workforce. Specific focuses are high schools and scholarships.	**Initiatives:** **High Quality High Schools:** The foundation supports efforts to create high-quality high schools where all students, regardless of their race or family income, can succeed in school. **High Performing Districts:** The foundation supports efforts to understand what makes a successful school district and funds projects that help build strong education systems. **State Strategies:** The National Governors Association, Achieve, Inc., and 27 states are working to shape policies that will require college-ready coursework and help all students graduate with the education they need for today's world.
Bridge Project **The Stanford Institute for Higher Education Research** Stanford University 650.723.7724 www.stanford.edu/group/bridgeproject	The Bridge Project is located at Stanford University and focuses on strengthening K-16 transition policies. The research focuses on admission policies, freshmen placement or advising policies, and curriculum content and assessment standards in K-12 systems.	**Publications:** *Enhancing College Completion: Secondary Schools and Colleges Must Work Together* (May 2007) http://www.stanford.edu/group/bridgeproject/Enhancing%20College%20Completion22.pdf *"Informed Self-Placement" at American River College: A Case Study* (May 2007) http://www.stanford.edu/group/bridgeproject/ARC.pdf *The Governance Divide: The Case Study for Georgia* (April 2006) http://www.highereducation.org/reports/governance_divide/GA/GA_case_study.pdf *Claiming Common Ground: State Policymaking for Improving College Readiness and Success*

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		(March 2006) http://www.stanford.edu/group/bridgeproject/Claim%20Comm%20Grnd%20Rpt%20FINAL%2003%2029%2006.pdf *The Governance Divide: A Report on a Four-State Study on Improving College Readiness and Success* (September 2005) http://www.stanford.edu/group/bridgeproject/8-26-05%20Governance%20Divide.pdf *Separation of K-12 and Postsecondary Education Governance and Policymaking: Evolution and Impact* (June 2005) http://www.stanford.edu/group/bridgeproject/Separation%20of%20K-12%20and%20Postsec%20Ed%20Governance%20and%20Policymak.pdf
Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (CEEP) at the School of Education Indiana University 509 East Third Street Bloomington, IN 47401-3654 812.855.4438 E-mail: ceep@indiana.edu http://ceep.indiana.edu/	CEEP is a center located at the Indiana University School of Education. Research focuses on program areas such as educational evaluation, literacy evaluation, education policy research and technical assistance, health, human services and community development evaluation and math, science and technology evaluation.	**Publications:** *Indiana's Mathematics and Science Performance: Do We Measure Up?* (Fall 2007) http://ceep.indiana.edu/projects/PDF/PB_V5N7_Fall_2007_EPB.pdf *High School Survey of Student Engagement* (February 2007) http://ceep.indiana.edu/hssse/ *Enriching the High School Curriculum Through Postsecondary Credit-Based Transition Programs* (Winter 2006) http://ceep.indiana.edu/projects/PDF/PB_V4N2_Winter_2006_Dual_Credit.pdf *Redesigning High Schools to Prepare Students for the Future: 2006 Update* (Spring 2006) http://ceep.indiana.edu/projects/PDF/PB_V4N6_Spring_2006_High_School.pdf *Examining College Remediation Trends in Indiana* (Spring 2006) http://ceep.indiana.edu/projects/PDF/PB_V4N5_Spring_2006_college_remediation.pdf
Center for Social Organization of Schools (CSOS) at Johns Hopkins University 3003 N. Charles St., Suite 200 Baltimore, MD 21218 410.516.8800 Email: webmaster@csos.jhu.edu	CSOS is an educational research and development center at Johns Hopkins University. The center studies how changes in the social organization of schools affect student	**Projects:** **Graduation Gap:** This project provides a Web site with resources pertaining to the "graduation gap" — the difference between existing graduation rates and skill levels in the nation's high schools and those needed to meet the economic and social challenges of the 21st Century. (http://web.jhu.edu/CSOS/graduation-gap/gradgap.html)

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
http://web.jhu.edu/csos	outcomes.	**Talent Development High Schools:** This initiative is a research-based model for high school reform that focuses on small learning communities, strong 9th grade intervention and curricular reform. Specific features include the extended class period, a 9th grade academy, upper-grade career academies, peer coaches for English and math teachers, a freshman seminar course and teacher teams. (http://web.jhu.edu/CSOS/tdhs/index.html)
Center on Education Policy (CEP) 1001 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 522 Washington, DC 20036 202.822.8065 Email: cep-dc@cep-dc.org www.cep-dc.org	CEP is a national nonprofit organization that advocates for public education and for more effective public schools. Focus areas include exit examinations, dropouts, student achievement and virtual schools.	**Publications** (for some reports listed, select the specific title found in the CEP Web site after selecting the hyperlink(s) below): *State High School Exit Exams: Students with Disabilities- Policy Brief 3* (March 2008) http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=493&parentID=481 *State High School Exit Exams: Patterns in Gaps in Pass Rates- Policy Brief 2* (February 2008) http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=493&parentID=481 *State High School Exit Exams: A Move Toward End-of-Course Exams- Policy Brief 1* (January 2008) http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=493&parentID=481 *Caught in the Middle: Arizona's English Language Learners and the High School Exit Exam* (November 2007) http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=491&parentID=481 *Behind the Numbers: Interviews in 22 States about Achievement Data and the No Child Left Behind Act Policies* (October 2007) http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=document.showDocumentByID&nodeID=1&DocumentID=227 *Are Private High Schools Better Academically Than Public High Schools?* (October 2007) http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=document.showDocumentByID&nodeID=1&DocumentID=226 *State High School Exit Exams: Working to Raise Test Scores* (September 2007) http://www.cep-dc.org/_data/n_0001/resources/live/HSEE2007.pdf *"It's Different Now": How Exit Exams Are Affecting Teaching and Learning in Jackson and Austin* (March 2007) http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=491&parentID=481 *State High School Exit Exams: States Continue Trend Toward Higher-Level Exit Exams, More*

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Subjects Tested (January 2007) http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=493&parentID=481 *State High School Exit Exams: Growth in High School Exit Exams Levels Off But Minority Students Affected Disproportionately* (January 2007) http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=493&parentID=481 *State High School Exit Exams: Gaps Persist in High School Exit Exams Pass Rates* (January 2007) http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=493&parentID=481 *High School Exit Exams: Basic Features* (December 2006) http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=493&parentID=481 *The Hidden Costs of High School Exit Exams* (September 2006) http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=493&parentID=481 *State High School Exit Exams: A Challenging Year* (August 2006) http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=493&parentID=481 *High School Exit Exams: Standards Differ from the No Child Left Behind Act* (March 2006) http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=493&parentID=481 *High School Exit Exams: Special Problems Affecting English Language Learners* (February 2006) http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=493&parentID=481 *High School Exit Exams: Effects on Traditionally Underserved Students* (January 2006) http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=493&parentID=481 *State High School Exit Exams: States Try Harder, but Gaps Persist* (August 2005) http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=document.showDocumentByID&DocumentID=143&C:CFusionMX7veri
The College Board 45 Columbus Avenue New York, NY 10023-6992 212.713.8000 www.collegeboard.com	The College Board is a nonprofit membership association composed of more than 5,400 schools, universities and colleges. The board provides	**Publications:** *AP Report to the Nation 2008* (February 2008) http://professionals.collegeboard.com/profdownload/ap-report-to-the-nation-2008.pdf *The Relationship of AP Teacher Practices and Student AP Exam Performance* (December 2007)

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
	research and policy analysis on AP, SAT, school counseling, state and federal policies and funding.	http://professionals.collegeboard.com/profdownload/pdf/080658RDRR07-02_080129.pdf *The CollegeKeys Compact: Getting Ready, Getting In, and Getting Through College: Expanding Options for Low-income Students* (October 2007) http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/prof/final-report.pdf *SAT Writing: An Overview of Research and Psychometrics to Date* (January 2007) http://www.collegeboard.com/research/pdf/RN-32.pdf *Comparability of Scores on the New and Prior Versions of the SAT Reasoning Test* (January 2007) http://www.collegeboard.com/research/pdf/RN-31.pdf *Determining SAT Benchmarks for College Readiness* (January 2007) *http://www.collegeboard.com/research/pdf/RN-30.pdf* *Education Pays: The Benefits of Higher Education for Individuals and Society* (2007) http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/about/news_info/cbsenior/yr2007/ed-pays-2007.pdf *AP Report to the Nation 2007* (2007) http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/about/news_info/ap/2007/2007_ap-report-nation.pdf *A Historical View of Subgroup Performance Differences on the SAT Reasoning Test* (2007) http://www.collegeboard.com/research/pdf/06-1868%20RDCBR06-5_070105.pdf *Investigating the Effects of Increased SAT Reasoning Test Length and Time on Performance of Regular SAT Examinees* (2007) http://www.collegeboard.com/research/pdf/07409RDCBRpt2006-9.pdf *The Impact of Course-Taking on Performance on SAT Items with Higher-Level Mathematics Content* (2007) http://www.collegeboard.com/research/pdf/07594RDCBRpt06-8.pdf *The Effects of Essay Placement and Prompt Type on Performance on the New SAT* (2007) http://www.collegeboard.com/research/pdf/07480RDCBRpt06-7.pdf *College Bound Seniors- 2007 National Report* (2007) http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/about/news_info/cbsenior/yr2007/national-report.pdf *The AP Program and Student Outcomes: A Summary of Research* (November 2006) http://www.collegeboard.com/research/pdf/RN-29.pdf

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		AP Professional Development in Florida: Effects on AP Exam Participation (August 2006) http://professionals.collegeboard.com/research/pdf/RN-27.pdf *Relationships Between PSAT/NMSQT Scores and Academic Achievement in High School* (2006) http://www.collegeboard.com/research/pdf/05-1844.CBRR_06-6Web-ready.pdf *College Bound Seniors- 2006 National Report* (2006) http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/about/news_info/cbsenior/yr2006/national-report.pdf *Education Pays Update 2006* (2006) http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/press/cost06/education_pays_06.pdf
Community College Research Center (CCRC) Teachers College Columbia University 525 West 120th Street, Box 174 439 Thorndike Hall New York, NY 10027 212.678.3091 Email: ccrc@columbia.edu http://www.tc.columbia.edu/ccrc	CCRC is housed at the Institute on Education and the Economy at Teachers College, Columbia University. The center focuses on two-year colleges and conducts research with respect to student transitions, workforce development and finance, among others.	**Publications:** *The Postsecondary Achievement of Participants in Dual Enrollment: An Analysis of Student Outcomes in Two States* (October 2007) http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/Publication.asp?uid=547 *When the Virtual Becomes Real: Student Learning in the Virtual Enterprises Program* (September 2007) http://www.tc.columbia.edu/iee/PAPERS/HughesGolannVE2007.pdf *Fifty States of Achieving the Dream: State Policies to Enhance Access to and Success in Community Colleges Across the United States* (April 2007) http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/DefaultFiles/SendFileToPublic.asp?ft=pdf&FilePath=c:\Websites\ccrc_tc_columbia_edu_documents\332_504.pdf&fid=332_504&aid=47&RID=504&pf=ContentByType.asp?t=1 *Learning About the Role of College Student Through Dual Enrollment Participation* (March 2007) http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/DefaultFiles/SendFileToPublic.asp?ft=pdf&FilePath=c:\Websites\ccrc_tc_columbia_edu_documents\332_502.pdf&fid=332_502&aid=47&RID=502&pf=ContentByType.asp?t=1 *Achieving the Dream in Ohio: State Policies Affecting Access to, and Success in, Community Colleges for Students of Color and Low-Income Students* (November 2006) http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/DefaultFiles/SendFileToPublic.asp?ft=pdf&FilePath=c:\Websites\ccrc_tc_columbia_edu_documents\332_468.pdf&fid=332_468&aid=47&RID=468&pf=ContentByType.asp?t=1 *Achieving the Dream in Connecticut: State Policies Affecting Access to, and Success in,*

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Community Colleges for Students of Color and Low-Income Students (November 2006) http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/DefaultFiles/SendFileToPublic.asp?ft=pdf&FilePath=c:\Websites\ccrc_tc_columbia_edu_documents\332_472.pdf&fid=332_472&aid=47&RID=472&pf=ContentByType.asp?t=1 *State Policies to Achieve the Dream in Five States: An Audit of State Policies to Aid Student Access to and Success in Community Colleges in the First Five Achieving the Dream States* (February 2006) http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/DefaultFiles/SendFileToPublic.asp?ft=pdf&FilePath=c:\Websites\ccrc_tc_columbia_edu_documents\332_392.pdf&fid=332_392&aid=47&RID=392&pf=ContentByType.asp?t=1 *Pathways to College Access and Success* (February 2006) http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/DefaultFiles/SendFileToPublic.asp?ft=pdf&FilePath=c:\Websites\ccrc_tc_columbia_edu_documents\332_385.pdf&fid=332_385&aid=47&RID=385&pf=ContentByType.asp?t=1 *Strengthening Transitions by Encouraging Career Pathways: A Look at State Policies and Practices* (January 2006) http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/Publication.asp?uid=380 *Update to State Dual Enrollment Policies: Addressing Access and Equity* (September 2005) http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/Publication.asp?UID=294
Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR) 1313 E. 60th Street Chicago, IL 60637 773.702.3364 http://ccsr.uchicago.edu	CCSR is located at the University of Chicago and includes university and district researchers as well as independent organizations. CCSR research focuses on informing and assessing policy and practice in the Chicago Public Schools.	**Publications:** *From High School to the Future: Potholes on the Road to College* (March 2008) http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/publications/CCSR_Potholes_Report.pdf *What Matters for Staying On-Track and Graduating in Chicago Public Schools* (July 2007) http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/content/publications.php?pub_id=116 *Keeping New Teachers: A First Look at the Influences of Induction in the Chicago Public Schools* (January 2007) http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/publications/keeping_new_teachers012407.pdf *Principal and Teacher Leadership in Chicago: Continuing Analysis of Three Initiatives* (September 2006) http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/publications/PrinTeachLeadership.pdf

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Small Schools on a Larger Scale: The First Three Years of the Chicago High School Redesign Initiative (June 2006) http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/publications/p85.pdf *Sample Individual School Reports: Results about Postsecondary Preparation* (April 2006) http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/publications/postsecon_sample_rpt.pdf *From High School to the Future: A First Look at Chicago Public School Graduates' College Enrollment, College Preparation, and Graduation from Four-Year Colleges* (April 2006) http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/publications/Postsecondary.pdf *Professional Communities and Instructional Improvement Practices: A Study of Small High Schools in Chicago* (January 2006) http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/publications/prof_comm_report.pdf *Understanding the Prairie State Achievement Exam: A Descriptive Report with Analysis of Student Performance* (September 2005) http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/publications/psae_report.pdf *The On-Track Indicator as a Predictor of High School Graduation* (June 2005) http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/publications/p78.pdf *Graduation and Dropout Trends in Chicago: A Look at Cohorts of Students from 1991 to 2004* (January 2005) http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/publications/p75.pdf *Ending Social Promotion: Dropout Rates in Chicago after Implementation of the Eighth-Grade Promotion Gate* (March 2004) http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/publications/p69.pdf
Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) One Massachusetts Ave, NW Suite 700 Washington, DC 20001 202.336.7000 www.ccsso.org	CCSSO is a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization of officials who head departments of education in the states. The council publishes a quarterly newsletter on high school efforts and hosts annual networking meetings on high school	**Projects:** **Secondary School Redesign:** The project (link here) supports state education agencies with the planning and implementation of their high school redesign efforts by providing technical assistance in areas that states defined as high priorities. Redesign work includes an adolescent literacy toolkit and state-level high school reports by state. The project also has state reports and resources on adolescent literacy, individual learning plans, smaller learning communities and science technology, engineering and math (STEM). **State Strategies to Redesign High Schools:** With funding from the U.S. Department of

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
	reform.	Education, the project (link here) supports state education agencies with the planning and implementation of their high school redesign efforts. Activities include identifying best practices, facilitating communication with states and working with technical assistance providers and national organizations to support state-level efforts. This project is a part of the larger **School Improvement Initiative**. This initiative includes other projects such as the Consortium for School Improvement, the School Health Project, School Readiness and the State Teacher Quality Network, among others.
Council of Great City Schools 1301 Pennsylvania Ave, NW Suite 702 Washington, DC 20004 202.393.2427 www.cgcs.org	The Council of Great City Schools is a coalition of 66 public urban school districts from across the county. The council advocates for urban schools and inner-city students through legislation, research and media relations. Research centers on achievement, school reform and teacher quality.	**Publications:** *Beating the Odds VIII: An Analysis of Student Performance and Achievement Gaps on State Assessments, Results from the 2006-2007 School Year* (April 2008) http://www.cgcs.org/pdfs/BTO8_Analysis.pdf *Supporting Successful Transitions to High School* (March 2008) http://www.cgcs.org/publications/CGCS_SuccessfulTransitions.pdf *Raising Student Achievement in the Newark Public Schools* (June 2007) http://www.cgcs.org/publications/Newark.pdf *Beating the Odds VII, An Analysis of Student Performance and Achievement Gaps on State Assessments, Results from the 2005-2006 School Year* (April 2007) http://www.cgcs.org/pdfs/BTO7_Analysis.pdf *Benefits of a High School Curriculum - A Joint Report by the Council of the Great City Schools and ACT* (April 2007) http://www.cgcs.org/pdfs/ACT_2007.pdf *Critical Trends in Urban Education* (October 2006) http://www.cgcs.org/pdfs/Critical_trends.pdf *Beating the Odds VI, 2004-2005 A City-By-City Analysis of Student Performance and Achievement Gaps on State Assessments* (Summer 2006) http://www.cgcs.org/images/Publications/BTOVI.pdf *Review of the Instructional Program and Operations of the Kansas City (Missouri) School District* (Summer 2006) http://www.cgcs.org/images/Publications/Kansas_city.pdf *Focusing on Achievement in the Pittsburgh Public Schools* (March 2006)

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		http://www.cgcs.org/pdfs/Pittsburgh.pdf *Review of the Organizational Structure and Operations of the Los Angeles Unified School District* (January 2006) http://www.cgcs.org/images/Publications/LA_report.pdf *Beating the Odds V: A City-By-City Analysis of Student Performance and Achievement Gaps on State Assessments* (March 2005) http://www.cgcs.org/pdfs/BTOVFINALFULLCOPY3.30.05.pdf
Educational Testing Service (ETS) Rosedale Road Princeton, NJ 08541 609.921.9000 E-mail: http://www.ets.org/questions.html www.ets.org	ETS is a nonprofit organization that focuses on providing assessments and research services. ETS activities include research, assessment development, test administration and scoring, along with instructional products and services.	**Publications:** *ETS Policy Notes--Students with Learning Disabilities Transitioning from High School to College* (Fall 2007) http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PICPN152.pdf *The Impact of Short-Term Use of Criterion on Writing Skills in Ninth Grade* (March 2007) http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/RR-07-07.pdf *America's Perfect Storm: Three Forces Changing Our Nation's Future* (January 2007) http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PICSTORM.pdf *High School Reform and Work: Facing Labor Market Realities* (June 2006) http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PICHSWORK.pdf *Keeping Our Edge: Americans Speak on Education and Competitiveness* (June 2006) http://www.ets.org/vgn-ext-templating/v/?vgnextoid=c288ed753a2fb010VgnVCM10000022f95190RCRD&vgnextchannel=b60e2867608e2110VgnVCM10000022f95190RCRD *Locked Up and Locked Out: An Educational Perspective on the U.S. Prison Population* (February 2006) http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PIC-LOCKEDUP.pdf *A Primer on Setting Cut Scores on Tests of Educational Achievement* (2006) http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/Cut_Scores_Primer.pdf *Fragile Futures: Risk and Vulnerability Among Latino High-Achievers* (December 2005) http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PICFRAGFUT.pdf

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Ready for the World? Americans Speak on High School Reform (June 2005) http://www.ets.org/vgn-ext-templating/v/?vgnextoid=26beaf5e44df4010VgnVCM10000022f95190RCRD&vgnextchannel=be652867608e2110VgnVCM10000022f95190RCRD *One-Third of a Nation: Rising Dropout Rates and Declining Opportunities* (February 2005) http://www.ets.org/Media/Education_Topics/pdf/onethird.pdf *Characteristics of Minority Students Who Excel on the SAT and in the Classroom* (January 2005) http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PICMINSAT.pdf *Unfinished Business: More Measured Approaches in Standards-Based Reform* (December 2004) http://www.ets.org/Media/Education_Topics/pdf/unfinbusiness.pdf *Schooling, Statistics, and Poverty: Can We Measure School Improvement?* (September 2004) http://www.ets.org/Media/Education_Topics/pdf/angoff9.pdf *Parsing the Achievement Gap: Baselines for Tracking Progress* (October 2003) http://www.ets.org/Media/Education_Topics/pdf/parsing.pdf
Education Trust 1250 H St. NW, Suite 700 Washington, DC 20005 202.293.1217 http://www2.edtrust.org/edtrust/ **The Education Trust-West** 155 Grand Avenue, Suite 1025 Oakland, CA 94612 510.465.6444	The Education Trust is an organization that focuses on academic achievement and closing the achievement gap through advocacy, research, policy analysis and technical assistance.	**Publications:** *Graduation Matters: Improving Accountability for High School Graduation* (August 2007) http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/5AEDABBC-79B7-47E5-9C66-7403BF76C3E2/0/GradMatters.pdf *Yes We Can: Telling Truths and Dispelling Myths About Race and Education in America* (September 2006) http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/DD58DD01-23A4-4B89-9FD8-C11BB072331E/0/YesWeCan.pdf *California at the Crossroads: Embracing the CAHSEE and Moving Forward* (August 2006) http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/034BB0E2-2710-4AE2-829B-6631BFA84462/0/CAattheCrossroads2006.pdf *Achievement in California 2006: Small Gains, Growing Gaps* (August 2006) http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/CEB9467F-BD78-4CD5-8C4F-E4F54DA51CDE/0/ETWAchievementinCA2006.pdf

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Promise Abandoned: How Policy Choices and Institutional Practices Restrict College Opportunities (August 2006) http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/B6772F1A-116D-4827-A326-F8CFAD33975A/0/PromiseAbandonedHigherEd.pdf *Teaching Inequality: How Poor and Minority Students Are Shortchanged on Teacher Quality* (June 2006) http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/010DBD9F-CED8-4D2B-9E0D-91B446746ED3/0/TQReportJune2006.pdf *Primary Progress, Secondary Challenge: A State-by-State Look at Student Achievement Patterns* (March 2006) http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/15B22876-20C8-47B8-9AF4-FAB148A225AC/0/PPSCreport.pdf *2006 Education Watch State Summaries* (2006) http://www2.edtrust.org/edtrust/summaries2006/states.html *The Power to Change: High Schools that Help All Students Achieve* (November 2005) http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/012DC865-97CA-4C2F-8A04-9924E2F392F0/0/ThePowerToChange.pdf *Gaining Traction, Gaining Ground: How Some High Schools Accelerate Learning for Struggling Students* (November 2005) http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/6226B581-83C3-4447-9CE7-31C5694B9EF6/0/GainingTractionGainingGround.pdf *Achievement in California 2005: Where Are We Now, How Far Have We Come and How Far Do We Have Left to Go?* (August 2005) http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/EE357D05-580F-4A8A-86DB-7E9033BF2DBA/0/2005CAHSEEreportFINAL.pdf *Getting Honest about Grad Rates: How States Play the Numbers and Students Lose* (June 2005) http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/C5A6974D-6C04-4FB1-A9FC-05938CB0744D/0/GettingHonest.pdf *In Their Own Words: Why Students and Parents Want and Need Rigorous Coursework in California High Schools* (February 2005) http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/8144EF2D-10BB-4A52-A376-609ED64D0810/0/ITOW.pdf *Stalled in Secondary: A Look at Student Achievement Since the No Child Left Behind Act* (January

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		2005) http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/77670E50-188F-4AA8-8729-555115389E18/0/StalledInSecondary.pdf *Preparing LAUSD High School Students for the 21st Century Economy: We Have the Way, but Do We Have the Will?* (2005) http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/7AAD1563-BE27-4114-B6E2-B34A4AFD45B7/0/LAUSDAG.pdf *Understanding and Implementing the A-G Rigorous Curriculum in Oakland High Schools* (2005) http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/A33F78F5-8821-4551-9501-0F9F4520AA4C/0/OAK_version.pdf *Understanding and Implementing the A-G Rigorous Curriculum in Los Angeles High Schools* (2005) http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/794BE0EE-57BF-4267-83C1-CEA5DBD14696/0/LA_version.pdf *The A-G Curriculum, College-Prep? Work-Prep? Life Prep* (Spring 2004) http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/25B673DE-1D3C-4293-8EBE-855B6E6386EE/0/AG_Guide_2004_final.pdf *On Course for Success: A Close Look at Selected High School Courses That Prepare All Students for College and Work* (2004) http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/success_report.pdf *Are California High Schools Ready for the 21st Century?* (2004) http://www2.edtrust.org/EdTrust/ETW/hs+report.htm *Students Speak Out: Why the A-G Curriculum Is Important to Students* http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/C2EC1D17-2B43-4241-94DA-454DFEB9CDF6/0/StudentsSpeakOut_Revised2.pdf
Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation 4801 Rockhill Road Kansas City, MO 64110 816.932.1000 www.kauffman.org	The Kauffman Foundation's work in education focuses on math and science and academic achievement.	**Initiatives:** **ChalkWaves:** A technology-based effort that makes a vast archive of more than 7,000 science-related digital video clips instantly available to teachers and students. **First Robotics:** The goal of FIRST (For Inspiration & Recognition of Science and Technology) is to help young people recognize the opportunity, power and joy of solving problems through science,

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		technology and engineering. **Kansas City Math and Science School District:** The $15-million commitment is designed to help build a world-class approach for math and science education that can serve as a model of educational entrepreneurship for school systems across the country. **Project Lead the Way:** This project uses a four-year sequence of courses that, when combined with college preparatory mathematics and science, introduces students to the scope, rigor and discipline of engineering and engineering technology. **Publications:** *The State of Middle School and High School Science Labs in the Kansas City Region* (August 2007) http://www.kauffman.org/pdf/kc_science_labs_0807.pdf *Important, but Not for Me: Parents and Students in Kansas and Missouri Talk about Math, Science and Technology Education* (2007) http://www.kauffman.org/pdf/important_but_not_for_me.pdf *Tapping America's Potential: The Education for Innovation Initiative* (July 2005) http://www.businessroundtable.org/pdf/20050727002TAPStatement.pdf
Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) 4455 Connecticut Ave NW, Suite 310 Washington, DC 20008 202.822.8405 Email: iel@iel.org www.iel.org	IEL is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with a mission to improve education by focusing on the development of leaders, school-community connections and policies and systems that affect children and youth.	**Publications:** *Community & Family Engagement: Principals Share What Works* (November 2006) http://communityschools.org/CCSDocuments/CommunityAndFamilyEngagement.pdf **See also:** National High School Alliance (below)
Jobs for the Future (JFF) 88 Broad Street Boston, MA 02110 617.728.4446 Email: info@jff.org	JFF is a nonprofit research, consulting and advocacy organization. JFF focuses on building economic opportunities for adults and	**Projects:** **Advancing the Dual Agenda in High School Reform:** This project (link here) is a multi-year effort to promote policies that advance the "dual agenda" of high achievement and high graduation rates from high school. The goal of the project is to double the number of low-income students who earn

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
http://www.jff.org/	improving youth transitions.	college credentials. Partners include Achieve, Inc., the Alliance for Excellent Education and the Data Quality Campaign. **Early College High School Initiative:** Since 2002, partner organizations have started or redesigned over 160 schools in 24 states (link here). The schools are designed so that students typically underrepresented in higher education can earn a high school diploma and an associate's degree or two years towards a bachelor's degree. **Double the Numbers 2007:** Double the Numbers (link here) was a conference in 2007 with more than 500 leaders from 41 states. Similar to other projects (see above), the goal is to double the number of low-income students who earn postsecondary credentials. The conference identified strategies for improving high school graduation rates and postsecondary attainment. For conference presentations and materials, follow this link. **Publications:** *Leveraging Postsecondary Partners to Build a College-going Culture* (April 2008) http://www.jff.org/Documents/ToolsPSEpshipslowres.pdf *Raising Graduation Rates in an Era of High Standards: Five Commitments for State Action* (February 2008) http://www.jff.org/Documents/raisinggradrates.pdf *Empowering Students: How Georgia College Early College Changes Student Aspirations* (January 2008) http://www.jff.org/Documents/empoweringstudents.pdf *Beating the Odds: The Real Challenges Behind the Math Achievement Gap- And What High-Achieving Schools Can Teach Us About How to Close It* (January 2008) http://www.jff.org/Documents/mathachievementpix.pdf *High Standards and High Graduation Rates: Moving Forward on a Dual Agenda in Massachusetts* (April 2007) http://www.jff.org/Documents/MassReport.pdf *Rigor Plus Support: How Science Teachers Use Literacy Techniques to Get Students Ready for College* (March 2007) http://www.jff.org/Documents/RigorPlusSupport.pdf *A Survey of Selected Work Readiness Certificates* (January 2007) http://www.jff.org/Documents/WorkReadiness.pdf

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Early College High School: Opportunity for a Lifetime (Video- 2007) http://www.earlycolleges.org/ECHSVideo.html *Moving Indiana Forward: High Standards and High Graduation Rates* (November 2006) http://www.jff.org/Documents/MovingIndianaForward.pdf *Addressing America's Dropout Challenge: State Efforts to Boost Graduation Rates Require Federal Support* (November 2006) http://www.jff.org/Documents/AddressDropChallenge.pdf *Smoothing the Path: Changing State Policies to Support Early College High School--Case Studies from Georgia, Ohio, Texas, and Utah* (July 2006) http://www.jff.org/Documents/smoothingpath.pdf *Return on Investment in Early College High Schools* (July 2006) http://www.jff.org/Documents/APA_ECHS_ROI_071906.pdf *Advancing Literacy: Building Capacity for Success in Early College High Schools* (July 2006) http://www.earlycolleges.org/Downloads/AdvancingLiteracy.pdf *Dual Enrollment in Rhode Island: Opportunities for State Policy* (June 2006) http://www.jff.org/Documents/Dual_Enrollment_in_RI.pdf *Identifying Potential Dropouts: Key Lessons for Building an Early Warning Data System* (June 2006) http://www.jff.org/Documents/IdentifyingPotentialDropouts.pdf *Teaching in the Early College High School Initiative* (May 2006) http://www.jff.org/Documents/TeachingECHS.pdf *Articulation, Alignment, and the Challenge of College-Readiness* (April 2006) http://www.jff.org/Documents/Commission_Testimony040406.pdf *Making Good on a Promise: What Policymakers Can Do to Support the Educational Persistence of Dropouts* (April 2006) http://www.jff.org/Documents/MkingGoodProm.pdf *Building a Portfolio of High Schools: A Strategic Investment Toolkit* (February 2006) http://www.jff.org/Documents/StrategicToolkit.pdf

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Postcards from the Margin: A National Dialogue on Accelerated Learning (2006) http://www.jff.org/Documents/PostcardsFromMargin.pdf *Accelerated Learning for All* (2006) http://www.earlycolleges.org/Downloads/accelerated%20learning.pdf *It's Kind of Different: Student Experiences in Two Early College High Schools* (September 2005) http://www.jff.org/Documents/KindofDifferent2.pdf *Head Start on College: Dual Enrollment Strategies in New England: 2004-2005* (June 2005) http://www.jff.org/Documents/HeadStartOnCollege.pdf *Benchmarks for Early College High Schools* (May 2005) http://www.earlycolleges.org/Downloads/ECHSBenchmarks6.24.05.pdf *Add and Subtract: Dual Enrollment as a State Strategy to Increase Postsecondary Success for Underrepresented Students* (April 2005) http://www.jff.org/Documents/Addsubtract.pdf *Remaking Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century: What Role for High School Programs?* (April 2005) http://www.jff.org/Documents/RemakingCTE.pdf *Designing and Financing an Integrated Program of College Study: Lessons from the California Academy of Liberal Studies* (April 2005) http://www.jff.org/Documents/calsechs.pdf *Financing Early College for Native Youth* (March 2005) http://www.earlycolleges.org/Downloads/Antioch%20ECHS%20finance.pdf *Career and Technical Education in Pennsylvania: Opportunities for Commonwealth Policy* (February 2005) http://www.jff.org/Documents/CareerTechEdinPA.pdf *Student Information System Frequently Asked Questions* (2005) http://www.earlycolleges.org/Downloads/SISFAQ.pdf *University Park Campus School: An Unparalleled Record of Achievement* (2005) http://www.jff.org/Documents/UPCSreport.pdf

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
KnowledgeWorks Foundation 1 West 4th Street Cincinnati, OH 45202 513.929.4777 www.kwfdn.org	The KnowledgeWorks Foundation's focus is education philanthropy. Emphasis is placed on high school, adult learning, accessing college, policy and community involvement.	**Initiatives:** **Our Role in Public Policy:** Support of policies and recommendations that will transform Ohio's high schools for the better, creating lasting, systemic change. **Ohio High School Transformation Initiative:** As of 2007 KnowledgeWorks Foundation supports 44 small high schools on what were once 15 large, low-performing urban campuses. These smaller schools help struggling students by raising graduation and achievement rates. **Project GRAD Ohio:** Established in the spring of 2002, Project GRAD Ohio was developed to help remove the barriers to academic achievement that were holding back thousands of low-income students in Ohio. The goal is to spread Project GRAD programs to urban school districts across the state. **Early College:** An innovative, successful model for Early College High Schools, Ohio's Dayton Early College Academy (DECA) is giving over 100 disadvantaged kids the opportunity to graduate from high school with not only a diploma, but an associate's degree or 60 hours of college credit. **Publications:** *To a Higher Degree: Real Life Stories of Progress in Four Early College High Schools* (2007) http://www.kwfdn.org/resource_library/_resources/legacy_2007_ec_form.asp *Most Likely to Succeed: Real-Life Stories of Progress in Five Redesigned Urban High Schools* (2007) http://www.kwfdn.org/resource_library/_resources/legacy_2007_ss_form.asp *Learning by Degree: Real-Life Stories from Three Early College High Schools* (2006) http://www.kwfdn.org/resource_library/getFile.asp?intResourceID=495 *Small Moments, Big Dreams: Real-Life Stories from Five Redesigned Urban High Schools* (2006) http://www.kwfdn.org/resource_library/getFile.asp?intResourceID=496 *Advancing High School Reform in the States: Policies and Programs* (2005) http://www.kwfdn.org/resource_library/_resources/Advacing_hs.pdf *Every Student Deserves a Legacy: A Year of Transformation in the Lives of Ohio's Urban High School Students* (2005) http://www.kwfdn.org/resource_library/_resources/legacy_form.asp

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
Lumina Foundation for Education 30 South Meridian Street Suite 700 Indianapolis, IN 46204 317.951.5300 http://www.luminafoundation.org/	The Lumina Foundation promotes access and success in education beyond high school through grants for research, evaluation, policy education and leadership education.	**Initiatives:** The Lumina Foundation funds grants in the following areas: • Research to expand knowledge and improve practices that affect students' access and success in postsecondary education • Innovative programs, guided by research, that present practical approaches to access and attainment among underserved students and adult learners • Activities that enhance the impact of Lumina Foundation-funded research and programs, such as leadership development, communication, evaluation and public policy analysis. **Publications:** *Critical Connections: Linking States' Unit Record Systems to Track Student Progress* (February 2007) http://www.luminafoundation.org/publications/Critical_Connections_Web.pdf *Fixing the Formula: A New Approach to Determining Independent Students' Ability to Pay for College* (May 2006) http://www.luminafoundation.org/publications/Fixing_the_Formula.pdf
Manhattan Institute for Policy Research 52 Vanderbilt Avenue New York, NY 10017 212.599.7000 http://www.manhattan-institute.org/	The Manhattan Institute is a nonprofit organization that focuses on issues of school choice and accountability through the institute's Center for Civic Innovation.	**Publications:** *How Much Are Public School Teachers Paid?* (January 2007) http://www.manhattan-institute.org/pdf/cr_50.pdf *Leaving Boys Behind: Public High School Graduation Rates* (April 2006) http://www.manhattan-institute.org/pdf/cr_48.pdf *The Effect of Residential School Choice on Public High School Graduation Rates* (April 2005) http://www.manhattan-institute.org/pdf/ewp_09.pdf *Public High School Graduation and College-Readiness Rates: 1991-2002* (February 2005) http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/ewp_08.htm
MDRC 19th Floor 16 East 34 Street New York, NY 10016	MDRC is a research organization whose educational focus includes secondary school reform,	**Projects:** **Career Academies:** Career Academies have the aim of restructuring large high schools into small learning communities and creating pathways between high school and further education and the

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
212.532.3200 Email: information@mdrc.org www.mdrc.org	elementary school interventions, after-school programs, district-wide reforms and postsecondary education.	workplace. **First Things First:** First Things First is a comprehensive school reform model that seeks to address the impersonal nature and poor performance of many secondary schools serving disadvantaged students. **Talent Development:** The Talent Development model for high schools encompasses five main features: small learning communities; curricula leading to advanced English and mathematics coursework; academic extra-help sessions; staff professional development strategies; and parent and community involvement. **Project GRAD:** Project GRAD operates on the premise that high schools, to be successful, must build on the success of the middle schools from which they draw their students, and is designed to operate not only at the high school level but also in the elementary and middle schools that constitute the "feeder system" for high schools. **Evaluation of Adolescent Literacy Intervention Strategies:** Also known as the Enhanced Reading Opportunities (ERO) study, this evaluation tests the effectiveness of two supplemental literacy interventions targeted to striving 9th grade readers — those with reading comprehension skills that are two to four years below grade level. **Publications:** *The Enhanced Reading Opportunities Study: Early Impact and Implementation Findings* (January 2008) http://www.mdrc.org/publications/471/full.pdf *Charting a Path to Graduation: The Effect of Project GRAD on Elementary School Student Outcomes in Four Urban Districts* (July 2006) http://www.mdrc.org/publications/432/full.pdf *Striving for Student Success: The Effect of Project GRAD on High School Student Outcomes in Three Urban School Districts* (July 2006) http://www.mdrc.org/publications/433/full.pdf *Meeting Five Critical Challenges of High School Reform: Lessons from Research on Three Reform Models* (May 2006) http://www.mdrc.org/publications/428/full.pdf *Closing the Aspirations-Attainment Gap: Implications for High School Reform: A Commentary from Chicago* (April 2006)

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		http://www.mdrc.org/publications/427/full.pdf *Student Context, Student Attitudes and Behavior, and Academic Achievement: An Exploratory Analysis* (January 2006) http://www.mdrc.org/publications/419/full.pdf *The Challenge of Scaling Up Education Reform: Findings and Lessons from First Things First* (July 2005) http://www.mdrc.org/publications/412/overview.html *Making Progress Toward Graduation: Evidence from the Talent Development High School Model* (May 2005) http://www.mdrc.org/publications/408/overview.html
National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) 1904 Association Drive Reston, VA 20191 703.860.0200 www.nassp.org	The NASSP is an association of middle-level and high school principals, assistant principals and school leaders from the US and other countries. NASSP provides publications, professional development and research on behalf of school leaders.	**Publications:** *NASSP Legislative Recommendations for High School Reform* (2005) http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/NASSP_LegRecsforHS.pdf
National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) 277 S. Washington St. Alexandria, VA 22314 703.684.4000 Email: boards@NASBE.org www.nasbe.org	NASBE is a non-profit organization that works to strengthen state leadership in educational policymaking, promote excellence in the education of all students, advocate equality of access and assure continued support for public education.	**Projects:** **High School Redesign:** The project (link here) serves to provide information from other projects and initiatives on high school redesign to individuals who serve on state boards of education. NASBE provides states the opportunity to have their policies audited for alignment to best practices and assists, when appropriate, state boards of education in making changes in their high school policies that result in increased numbers of graduates.
National Center for Higher	NCHEMS is a nonprofit	**Publications:**

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) 3035 Center Green Drive, Suite 150 Boulder, CO 80301 303.497.0301 Email: info@nchems.org www.nchems.org	organization with a focus on improving strategic decisionmaking in higher education in the states and U.S. through research, consulting, information services, publications and a membership program.	*Critical Connections: Linking States' Unit Record Systems to Track Student Progress* (January 2007) http://www.luminafoundation.org/publications/Critical_Connections_Web.pdf
National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education 152 North Third Street, Suite 705 San Jose, CA 95112 408.271.2699 Email: center@highereducation.org www.highereducation.org	The National Center is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with a focus on the system of higher education. The National Center conducts research and analyses of policy issues regarding opportunity and achievement in higher education.	**Publications:** *Mixed Signals in California: A Mismatch Between High Schools and Community Colleges* (March 2008) http://www.highereducation.org/reports/pa_mixed_signals/mis.pdf *Investigating the Alignment of High School and Community College Assessments in California* (June 2007) http://www.highereducation.org/reports/brown_niemi/BROWN_NIEMI.pdf *Squeeze Play: How Parents and the Public Look at Higher Education Today* (May 2007) http://www.highereducation.org/reports/squeeze_play/squeeze_play.pdf *"Informed Self-Placement" At American River College: A Case Study* (May 2007) http://www.highereducation.org/reports/arc/ARC.pdf *Setting a Public Agenda for Higher Education in the States: Lessons Learned from the National Collaborative for Higher Education Policy* (December 2006) http://www.highereducation.org/reports/public_agenda/public_agenda.pdf *American Higher Education: How Does It Measure Up for the 21st Century?* (May 2006) http://www.highereducation.org/reports/hunt_tierney/Hunt_Tierney.pdf *The Governance Divide: The Case Study for Georgia* (April 2006) http://www.highereducation.org/reports/governance_divide/GA/GA_case_study.pdf *The Governance Divide: The Case Study for Oregon* (April 2006) http://www.highereducation.org/reports/governance_divide/OR/OR_case_study.pdf *Claiming Common Ground: State Policymaking for Improving College Readiness and Success*

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		(March 2006) http://www.highereducation.org/reports/common_ground//common_ground.pdf *The Governance Divide: A Report on a Four-State Study on Improving College Readiness and Success* (September 2005) http://www.highereducation.org/reports/governance_divide/governance_divide.pdf *Cracks in the Education Pipeline: A Business Leader's Guide to Higher Education Reform* (May 2005) http://www.highereducation.org/reports/ced/ced.pdf
National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE) 555 13th Street, NW Suite 500 West Washington, DC 20004 202.783.3668 Email: info@ncee.org http://www.ncee.org/	NCEE is a nonprofit organization with a specific focus on workforce development. Programs include a commission on the skills of the American workforce, a state alliance for high performance and a workforce development program.	**Publications:** *Tough Choices or Tough Times* [executive summary] (2007) http://www.skillscommission.org/pdf/exec_sum/ToughChoices_EXECSUM.pdf **America's Choice (affiliated organization):** Offers resources "to ensure that every student is successful on state and local assessments and prepared for college." The America's Choice High School Design includes standards and assessments, curriculum and instruction, leadership and organization, professional development and parent engagement.
National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) 7700 East First Place Denver, CO 80230 303.364.7700 **Washington Office** 444 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 515 Washington, DC 20001 202.624.5400 www.ncsl.org	NCSL is a bipartisan organization that serves the legislatures and staffs of the nations states and territories. NCSL covers a broad range of education issues with a specific focus on state-level policy.	**Projects:** The K-12 Education Web site offers 30 issues areas with information and links to research, articles and legislation. Issues areas include accountability, college preparatory programs, drop out reporting, high school redesign, K-16 and school leadership. **Education Bill Tracking Database:** The database allows searches of legislative bills in the 50 states, Washington D.C., and the territories. Searches can be comprehensive or issue specific. **Education Projects and Services:** • Engaging Latino Communities for Education (ENLACE) • Education for the 21st Century • High School Redesign

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		• Education Technology
National Council of La Raza (NCLR) Raul Yzaguirre Building 1126 16th Street, NW Washington, DC 20036 202.785.1670 www.nclr.org	NCLR is the nation's largest Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization. NCLR's focus on education includes a programmatic division that provides community-level support and a policy division that advocates for positive outcomes for Latino students.	**Initiatives:** **Charter School Development Initiative:** These 50 new schools form part of a larger network of existing NCLR-affiliated charter and alternative schools, with a total of 100 schools. As a means to significantly increase educational opportunities and high school graduation rates for Latinos, the NCLR Charter School Development Initiative advocates for the academic success of Latino students. **Early College Project:** The Early College Project will begin as a demonstration project, establishing the initial cohort of 12 schools, with the intention that the models developed and lessons learned will subsequently be shared with the broader NCLR network of schools. **Leadership Institute for Latino Literacy (LILL):** This program provides teachers of ELL and Latino students with strategies on strengthening literacy skills across the content areas. **Parents as Partners (PAP):** This program is based on a successful model developed by the Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE) in which parental involvement in a child's educational process is strengthened by forging a working partnership between parents and schools. The program looks to train low-income, ethnically-diverse parents of elementary and middle/high school students. **Publications:** *Hispanic Education in the United States* (2007) http://www.nclr.org/files/43582_file_SB8_HispEd_fnl.pdf *Improving Assessment and Accountability for English Language Learners in the No Child Left Behind Act* (March 2006) http://www.nclr.org/content/publications/download/37365 *Educating English Language Learners: Understanding and Using Assessment* (January 2006) http://www.nclr.org/content/publications/download/32971 *Educating English Language Learners: Implementing Instructional Practices* (August 2005) http://www.nclr.org/content/publications/download/36199

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
National Governors Association (NGA) NGA Center for Best Practices Hall of the States, 444 N. Capitol Street, Suite 267, Washington, D.C. 20001-1512 202.624.5300 Email: webmaster@nga.org www.nga.org	NGA is a bipartisan organization comprising the nation's governors. Focus areas include: early education, K-12 education, high school redesign, postsecondary education and workforce development.	**Initiatives:** **NGA Center's Honor States Grant Program**: This program is a $23.6 million, governor-led initiative to improve high school and college-ready graduation rates in 26 states. Phase I of the grant offers governors the opportunity to develop and begin to implement comprehensive plans to improve high school graduation and college readiness rates. Phase II grants focuses on state work in more specific areas such as adding rigor, expanding AP participation, and improving low performing high schools. **Graduation Pays Web site**: Includes brochures for all 50 states making the economic case for high school reform and increasing graduation rates. **Publications:** *Innovation America: A Final Report* (July 2007) http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0707INNOVATIONFINAL.PDF *Retooling Career Technical Education* (June 2007) http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0706TECHED.PDF *Innovation America - Building a Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Agenda* (February 2007) http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0702INNOVATIONSTEM.PDF *Implementing Graduation Counts: State Progress to Date* (August 2006) http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0608GRADPROGRESS.PDF *Graduation Counts: Compact and Task Force Report - Guidance on State Implementation and Reporting* (February 2006) http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0602GRADGUIDANCE.PDF *Graduation Counts: A Compact on State High School Graduation Data* (July 2005) http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0507GRADCOMPACT.PDF *Graduation Counts: A Report of the National Governors Association Task Force on State High School Graduation Data* (July 2005) http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0507GRAD.PDF *A Profile of State Action to Improve America's High Schools* (July 2005)

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0507EDSTATEPROFILES.PDF *Summary of Results for the Rate Your Future Survey* (July 2005) http://www.nga.org/Files/ppt/RATEYOURFUTURESURVEY.PPT *Improving the High School-to-College Transition Through Leadership and Governance* (April 2005) http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0504HIGHSCHOOLTRANSITION.pdf *Reading to Achieve: A Governor's Guide to Adolescent Literacy* (2005) http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0510GOVGUIDELITERACY.PDF *Supporting Student Success: A Governor's Guide to Extra Learning Opportunities* (2005) http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0509GOVGUIDEELO.PDF
National High School Alliance (housed at the Institute for Educational Leadership) 4455 Connecticut Avenue, NW Suite 310 Washington, DC 20008 202.822.8405 http://hsalliance.org/	The HS Alliance is a partnership of 50 organizations focused on high school reform. Specific educational areas include academic achievement, closing the achievement gap and civic and personal growth.	**Publications:** *Academic Interventions to Help Students Meet Rigorous Standards: State Policy Options* (April 2007) http://www.hsalliance.org/_downloads/NNCO/AcademicInterventionsFinal.pdf *Policy Brief: Federal Policy Positions of National High School Alliance Partners* (February 2007) http://www.hsalliance.org/Policy/FedPolicyBrief.pdf *All National High School Alliance Indicators Protocols* (December 2006) http://www.hsalliance.org/call_action/Protocols/AllProtocols.pdf *Defining Rigor in High School: Framework and Assessment Tool* (October 2006) http://www.hsalliance.org/_downloads/NNCO/RigorFrameworkTool.pdf *Increasing Academic Rigor in High School: A Common Agenda for National Education Organizations* (July 2006) http://www.hsalliance.org/_downloads/NNCO/RigorScanJuly07.pdf *A Call to Action: Indicators Protocol* (May 2006) http://www.hsalliance.org/call_action/Protocols/CTABasedProtocol.pdf
National League of Cities (NLC) 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW	NLC is a membership organization comprised of	**Initiatives:**

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
Suite 550 Washington, DC 20004 202.262.3000 Email: info@nlc.org www.nlc.org	U.S. cities and whose focus on education is managed through the Institute for Youth, Education and Families. The institute's five program areas are education and after-school, youth development, early education, children's health and safety, and family economic success.	**High School Reform:** Municipal leaders can play key roles in high school reform, such as: Building public will and capacity to confront reform needs; convening community leaders to develop long-term strategic plans; influencing changes in policies that inhibit innovation; and helping with financing and facilities. **Publications:** *Setting the Stage for New High Schools: Municipal Leadership in Supporting High School Alternatives* (2007) http://www.nlc.org/ASSETS/8D1C9C4738C7419DAE8060B73828827D/IYEF_Setting_the_Stage.pdf *2007 City Education Snapshots* (2007) http://www.nlc.org/ASSETS/CC713D26BEBD4096B498D1A93248C101/IYEF_Education_Snapshots.pdf
National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC) 1836 Jefferson Place, NW Washington, DC 20036 202.659.1064 Email: nyec@nyec.org www.nyec.org	NYEC is a membership network focused on improving organizations that aid youth in becoming better citizens. Program areas include workforce development and school transitions.	**Publications:** *Financing Alternative Education Pathways: Profiles and Policy 2005* (August 2005) http://nyec.modernsignal.net/content/education/financing_alt_ed_pathways_2005.pdf *Funding Alternative Education Pathways: A Review of the Literature* (February 2005) http://nyec.modernsignal.net/content/education/Final_Alternative_Education_Literature_Review.pdf
Pathways to College Network 31 St. James Ave., 4th Fl Boston, MA 02116 617.535.6829 Email: pathways@teri.org www.pathwaystocollege.net	Pathways to College Network is an alliance of 38 national organizations seeking to advance college access and success. The network connects research with policymakers, practitioners and education leaders.	**Publications:** *Academic Rigor: At the Heart of College Access and Success* (2007) http://www.pathwaystocollege.net/pdf/rigor.pdf *High Expectations: A Key to Success for All* (2007) http://www.pathwaystocollege.net/pdf/highexp.pdf *Social Support: An Essential Ingredient to Success* (2007) http://www.pathwaystocollege.net/pdf/support.pdf *Using Data to Improve Educational Outcomes* (2007)

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		http://www.pathwaystocollege.net/pdf/data.pdf *The Link between High School Reform and College Access and Success for Low-Income and Minority Youth* (2005) http://www.pathwaystocollege.net/pdf/HighSchoolReform_FullReport.pdf *How is School Reform Tied to Increasing College Access and Success for Low-Income and Minority Youth?* (2004) http://www.pathwaystocollege.net/pdf/HowisSchoolReform.pdf *How Do Pre-Collegiate Outreach Programs Impact College-Going Among Underrepresented Students?* (2003) http://www.pathwaystocollege.net/pdf/PrecollegiateOutreachPrograms.pdf *Improving College Access for Minority, Low-Income and First Generation Students* (2003) http://www.pathwaystocollege.net/pdf/ImprovingCollegeAccess.pdf *Pre-College Academic Programs and Interventions* (2003) http://www.pathwaystocollege.net/pdf/PrecollegeInterventions.pdf
Rodel Foundation of Delaware 100 W. 10th Street Suite 704 Wilmington, DE 19801 302.504.5249 www.rodelfoundationde.org	The Rodel Foundation of Delaware works to improve education in the state of Delaware. The Foundation's focus on education includes teacher quality, leadership, standards and accountability and school finance, among others.	**Publications:** *Would You, Could You, Should You Go to College* (2006) http://www.rodelfoundationde.org/pdfs/College_Guide_0607_v2.pdf
Social Science Research Council (SSRC) 810 7th Avenue New York, NY 10019 212.377.2700 Email: info@ssrc.org www.ssrc.org	SSRC is an independent, nonprofit research organization. Research in K-12 education is focused on evaluation, assessment and interpretation, and education law and	**Initiatives:** **Transitions to College Project**: This project examines the extent to which conditions for opportunity and success are available to all American adolescents as they attempt to navigate the transition from secondary school to college and beyond. The project looks primarily at the time period between high school and the achievement of the first postsecondary. Project includes a searchable database with reports, policy briefs and journal articles on transition issues.

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
	business.	**Publications:** *Questions That Matter: Setting the Research Agenda on Access and Success in Postsecondary Education* (2005) http://programs.ssrc.org/ki/images/QTM.pdf
Southern Governors' Association (SGA) Hall of the States 444 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 200 Washington, DC 20001- 202.624.5897 Email: sga@sso.org www.southerngovernors.org	SGA is the largest of the regional governors' associations whose focus on education includes improving the K-12 system and encouraging postsecondary attendance.	**Projects:** **Education in the South: A Passport to Opportunity:** The initiative supports Southern governors' efforts to improve high school achievement and completion rates. Read the executive summary of the report written for this project.
Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) 592 10th St. N.W. Atlanta, GA 30318-5776 404.875.9211 www.sreb.org	SREB is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that assists states and education leaders to advance education and improve the social and economic conditions of the region. SREB's focus in high schools includes accountability and assessment, college readiness, distance learning, and the High Schools That Work program.	**Initiatives:** **High Schools That Work:** This initiative's goal is to prepare students for careers and further education by improving curriculum and instruction in high schools and middle grades. **Electronic Campus:** Designed to provide learning opportunities from accredited colleges and universities that offered courses and programs that exceed SREB's *Principles of Good Practice*. **Publications:** **Accountability** *From Goals to Results: Improving Education System Accountability* (2006) http://www.sreb.org/main/Goals/Publications/06E12-System_Accountability.pdf **AP/IB** *SREB States Lead the Nation in Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Programs* (July 2007) http://www.sreb.org/main/Goals/publications/07E05_Adv_placement.pdf *Progress in Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate in SREB States* (May 2006)

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		http://www.sreb.org/main/Goals/Publications/06E07-Progress_AP_IB.pdf **Assessment** *The Changing Roles of Statewide High School Exams* (2007) http://www.sreb.org/main/Goals/Publications/07E03_Statewide_Exams.pdf *Improving ACT and SAT Scores: Making Progress, Facing Challenges* (2007) http://www.sreb.org/main/Goals/Publications/07E02_ACT_and_SAT_Test_Scores.pdf *A Guide for Using the HSTW Assessment Report to More Deeply Implement School Reform* (November 2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2006Pubs/06V59w_guide_for_hstw_assessment.pdf **Career/Technical Education** *Advancing Students' Academic and Technical Knowledge Through Technology and Effective School and Classroom Practices* (October 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007Pubs/07V50w_advance_knowledge_objective4.pdf *Project Lead the Way Works: A New Type of Career and Technical Program* (September 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007pubs/07V29_Research_Brief_PLTW.pdf *Teaching Academic Content Embedded in Career/Technical Studies at Shared-Time Centers and Comprehensive High Schools* (September 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007Pubs/07V31w_ct_studies_objective2.pdf *Career/Technology Centers That Work: An Enhanced High Schools That Work Design For Technology Centers* (August 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007pubs/07V28_enhanced_design_technology.pdf *Actions States Can Take to Place a Highly Qualified Career/Technical Teacher in Every Classroom* (2005) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2005Pubs/05V73_career_tech_state_actions.pdf **Distance Education/Virtual Schools**

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Report on State Virtual Schools (August 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/EdTech/SVS/2007_report_on_state_virtual_schools.pdf *Checklist for Evaluating Online Courses* (November 2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/EdTech/pubs/2006Pubs/06T06_Checklist_for_Evaluating-Online-Courses.pdf *Online Teaching Evaluation for State Virtual Schools* (October 2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/EdTech/pubs/2006Pubs/06T04_Online_teaching_evaluation_checklist.pdf *Standards for Quality Online Courses* (October 2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/EdTech/pubs/2006Pubs/06T05_Standards_quality_online_courses.pdf *Cost Guidelines for State Virtual Schools* (August 2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/EdTech/pubs/PDF/06T03_Virtual_School_Costs.pdf **High School Transitions** *Supporting Ninth-Grade Students to Achieve in High School and Preparing Seniors for Postsecondary Education and a Career* (November 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007Pubs/07V53w_transitions_objective6.pdf *Building Transitions from High School to College and Careers For Alabama's Youth* (June 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007pubs/07V16_CCTI_alabama.pdf *Building Transitions from High School to College and Careers For Montana's Youth* (June 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007pubs/07V18_CCTI_montana.pdf *Building Transitions from High School to College and Careers For New Mexico's Youth* (June 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007pubs/07V17_CCTI_new_mexico.pdf *Building Transitions from High School to College and Careers For Georgia's Youth* (May 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007pubs/07V14_CCTI_georgia.pdf *Building Transitions from High School to College and Careers For Hawaii's Youth* (May 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007pubs/07V13_CCTI_hawaii.pdf

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Building Transitions from High School to College and Careers For Texas' Youth (May 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007pubs/07V12_CCTI_texas.pdf *Giving Students a Chance to Achieve: Getting Off to a Fast and Successful Start in Grade Nine* (May 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007pubs/07V15w_ninthgrade.pdf *Building Transitions from High School to College and Careers For Nebraska's Youth* (March 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007pubs/07V06_CCTI_nebraska.pdf *High School to College and Careers: Aligning State Policies 2007* (January 2007) http://www.sreb.org/main/Goals/Publications/06E20_Aligning_2007.pdf *Building Transitions from High School to College and Careers For Oklahoma's Youth* (September 2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2006pubs/06V51_CCTI_oklahoma.pdf *High Schools That Work Follow-up Study of 2004 High School Graduates: Transitioning to College and Careers from a High Schools That Work High School* (September 2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2006pubs/06V54_Research%20Brief_2004_followup.pdf *Building Transitions from High School to College and Careers for North Carolina's Youth* (June 2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2006pubs/06V22_CCTI_NC.pdf *Getting Students Ready for College and Careers* (2006) http://www.sreb.org/main/Goals/Publications/06E04-Students_Ready_College_Career.pdf *Building Transitions from High School to College and Careers for Tennessee's Youth* (2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2006Pubs/06V07_CCTI_Tennessee.pdf *Building Transitions from High School to College and Careers for New Jersey's Youth* (2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2006Pubs/06V06_CCTI_New_Jersey.pdf *Building Transitions from High School to College and Careers for Louisiana's Youth* (2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2006Pubs/06V13_CCTI_Louisiana.pdf *High Schools That Work Follow-up Study of 2002 High School Graduates: Implications for Improving Transitions from High School to College and Careers* (May 2005)

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/briefs/05V10_Research_Follow-up_2002_Graduates.pdf *Building Transitions from High School to College and Careers for South Carolina's Youth* (2005) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2005pubs/05V78_CCTI_South_Carolina.pdf *Building Transitions from High School to College and Careers for West Virginia's Youth* (2005) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2005Pubs/Transitions_WV_Youth.asp **School Reform** *Comprehensive School Reform: Making a Difference in Improving High Schools* (March 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007pubs/07V09_CSR_insideandcover.pdf **Student Achievement** *District Action: Supporting Schools with Data, Technology and Strong Leadership to Raise Student Achievement* (December 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007Pubs/07V56w_district_action_objective8.pdf *Creating a School Culture to Increase the Achievement of All Students in Reading, Writing, Mathematics and Science* (September 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007Pubs/07V49w_school_culture_objective3.pdf *Top 10 Ways to Improve Science Achievement: Actions for School Principals, Assistant Principals, Department Chairs and School Improvement Consultants* (August 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007pubs/07V26_10_things_in_science.pdf *10 Strategies for Improving High School Graduation Rates and Student Achievement* (November 2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2006Pubs/06V65_10_StrategiesForImprovingGraduation.pdf *Raising Achievement and Graduation Rates: Schools Pave the Way to the Future for All Students* (September 2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2006Pubs/06V53w_raising_achievement_objective2.pdf *Raising Achievement and Improving Graduation Rates: How Nine High Schools That Work Sites*

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Are Doing It (June 2005) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/briefs/05V14_ResearchBrief_raising_graduation_rates.pdf *Rigor, Relevance and Relationships Improve Achievement in Rural High Schools* (2005) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2005Pubs/05V18_RigorRelevanceRelationship.pdf **Teacher Quality** *Raising Achievement and Graduation Rates by Supporting Teachers in Developing Quality Classroom Instruction* (November 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007Pubs/07V52w_quality_instruction_objective5.pdf **Other** *Guiding Students to Meet Challenging Academic and Career Goals: Involving School Mentors, Parents and Community Leaders* (November 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007Pubs/07V55w_challenging_goals_objective7.pdf *Making Grading and Instructional Changes to Motivate Diverse Groups of Students to Learn* (September 2007) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2007Pubs/07V30w_grading_changes_objective1.pdf *Raising Students to Proficiency: Motivating All Students through Higher Expectations* (November 2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2006Pubs/06V66w_raising_to_proficiency_objective1.pdf *Giving More Students Access to a Rigorous and Relevant Mathematics Core* (October 2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2006Pubs/06V56w_mathematics_objective4.pdf *Putting College-preparatory Social Studies on the Map: Ensuring Students Are Prepared for Their New Frontiers* (October 2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2006Pubs/06V55w_social_studies_objective4.pdf *Urban Students Achieve When High Schools Implement Proven Practices* (October 2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2006Pubs/06V61_ResearchBrief_urban.pdf

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Students Rocket to Success in High-Level Science Courses with Hands-on Projects and Labs (October 2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2006Pubs/06V63w_science_objective4.pdf *Students Need Strong Guidance and Advisement to Succeed* (September 2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2006Pubs/06V52w_guidance_and_advisement_objective4.pdf *Students Can't Wait: High Schools Must Turn Knowledge into Action* (June 2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2006pubs/06V19_Students_Cant_Wait.pdf *What Really Works? Schools Succeed When Using the Key Practices of High Schools That Work* (June 2006) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/2006pubs/06V21_What_Really_Works.pdf *Project Lead the Way: A Pre-engineering Curriculum That Works* (May 2005) http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/briefs/05V08_Research_PLTW.pdf *Getting Serious About High School Graduation* (2005) http://www.sreb.org/main/Goals/Publications/05E06-Graduation.pdf
State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) 3035 Center Green Dr., Suite 100 Boulder, CO 80301 303.541.1600 Email: sheeo@sheeo.org www.sheeo.org	SHEEO is a nationwide, nonprofit association of the chief executive officers of the governing boards of postsecondary education. SHEEO's focus on K-12 education includes P-16 data systems, teacher quality and workforce development.	**Publications:** *More Student Success: A Systemic Solution* (2007) http://www.sheeo.org/k16/StudSucc2.pdf
U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Ave., SW Washington, DC 20202 800.USA.LEARN (800.872.5327)	The U.S. Department of Education is a federal, cabinet-level agency that establishes federal education policy. The	**Initiatives:** • No Child Left Behind • American Competitiveness Initiative • National Mathematics Advisory Council

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
www.ed.gov	department has a high school initiative that supports rigorous instruction to improve graduation rates and that prepares students for postsecondary education or the workforce.	• High School **Publications:** *Parent Expectations and Planning for College: Statistical Analysis Report* (April 2008) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2008/2008079.pdf *Mathematics Coursetaking and Achievement at the End of High School: Evidence from the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002* (January 2008) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2008/2008319.pdf *Deciding on Postsecondary Education: Final Report* (December 2007) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2008/2008850.pdf *Numbers and Rates of Public High School Dropouts: School Year 2004-05* (December 2007) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2008/hsdropouts/ *Highlights from PISA 2006: Performance of U.S. 15-Year-Old Students in Science and Mathematics Literacy in an International Context* (December 2007) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2008/2008016.pdf *Interpreting 12th-Graders' NAEP-Scaled Mathematics Performance Using High School Predictors and Postsecondary Outcomes from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988* (September 2007) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007328.pdf *Advanced Mathematics and Science Coursetaking in the Spring High School Senior Classes of 1982, 1992, and 2004* (August 2007) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007312.pdf *Engaging Parents in Education: Lessons From Five Parental Information And Resource Centers* (June 2007) http://www.ed.gov/admins/comm/parents/parentinvolve/engagingparents.pdf *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2005* (June 2007) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/dropout05/ *Findings from the Condition of Education 2007: High School Coursetaking* (June 2007) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007065.pdf *The Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate for Public High Schools From the Common Core of*

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Data: School Years 2002-03 and 2003-04 (June 2007) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2006/2006606rev.pdf *Public Elementary and Secondary School Student Enrollment, High School Completions, and Staff from the Common Core of Data: School Year 2005-06* (June 2007) http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2007352 *Event Dropout Rates for Public School Students in Grades 9-12: 2002-03 and 2003-04* (May 2007) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007026.pdf *Course Credit Accrual and Dropping Out of High School* (April 2007) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007018.pdf *America's High School Graduates: Results from the 2005 NAEP High School Transcript Study* (February 2007) http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2007467 *Academic Pathways, Preparation, and Performance: A Descriptive Overview of the Transcripts from the High School Graduating Class of 2003-04* (November 2006) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007316.pdf *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2004* (November 2006) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/dropout/ *The Nation's Report Card: 12th-Grade Reading and Mathematics 2005* (November 2006) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007316.pdf *Charter High Schools: Closing the Achievement Gap* (October 2006) http://www.ed.gov/admins/comm/choice/charterhs/report.pdf *Economic Outcomes of High School Completers and Noncompleters 8 Years Later* (October 2006) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007019.pdf *United States High School Sophomores: A Twenty-Two Year Comparison, 1980-2002* (September 2006) http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2006327 *The Postsecondary Educational Experiences of High School Career and Technical Education Concentrators: Selected Results from the NELS:88/2000 Postsecondary Education Transcript Study* (July 2006) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2006/2006309.pdf

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		Dropout Rates in the United States: 2002 and 2003 (June 2006) http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2006062 *The Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate for Public High Schools from the Common Core of Data: School Years 2001-02 and 2002-03* (June 2006) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2006/2006606.pdf *The Adult Lives of At-Risk Students: The Roles of Attainment and Engagement in High School* (March 2006) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2006/2006328.pdf
Urban Institute 2100 M Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20037 202.833.7200 Email: paffairs@ui.urban.org www.urban.org	The Urban Institute is a nonpartisan economic and social policy research organization. The institute houses the Education Policy Center that does research in areas such as accountability, school vouchers, standards and teacher quality, among others.	**Publications:** *Making a Difference?: The Effect of Teach for America on Student Performance in High School* (March 2008) http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411642_Teach_America.pdf *Baltimore City's High School Reform Initiative: Schools, Students, and Outcomes* (December 2007) http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411590_baltimoreschools.pdf *Teacher Credentials and Student Achievement in High School: A Cross-Subject Analysis with Student Fixed Effects* (October 2007) http://www.caldercenter.org/PDF/1001104_Teacher_Credentials_HighSchool.pdf *Cramming: The Effects of School Accountability on College-Bound Students (CALDER Working Paper)* (April 2007) http://www.caldercenter.org/PDF/1001068_Cramming.pdf *Gender Gaps in Math and Reading Gains During Elementary and High School by Race and Ethnicity* (March 2007) http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411428_Gender_Gaps.pdf *Financial Literacy Strategies: Where Do We Go from Here?* (August 2006) http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/311352_financial_literacy.pdf *An Overview of Alternative Education* (January 2006) http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411283_alternative_education.pdf *Achievement Gains in Elementary and High School* (March 2006)

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
		http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411290_achievement_gains.pdf *Who Graduates in the South?* (May 2005) http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/900817_who_graduates_south.pdf *Who Graduates in California?* (May 2005) http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/900794_who_graduates_CA.pdf
Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) 3035 Center Green Dr. Boulder, CO 80301 303.541.0200 www.wiche.edu	WICHE is a regional organization created to facilitate resource sharing among the higher education systems in the West.	**Projects:** **State Policy Inventory Database Online (SPIDO):** This database is a joint project between WICHE and the Pathways to College Network. SPIDO is designed to provide state and national policymakers, education leaders, practitioners and education consumers with an inventory of state-level policies and resources in key policy domains related to student achievement, access and success in higher education. **Publications:** *Thinking Outside the Box: Policy Strategies for Readiness, Access, and Success* (March 2007) http://www.wiche.edu/Policy/Changing_direction/documents/ThinkingOutsideTheBox.pdf *Accelerated Learning Options: Moving the Needle on Access and Success* (June 2006) http://www.wiche.edu/Policy/Accelerated_Learning/report/ALO.pdf *Benchmarks: WICHE Region* (2006) http://www.wiche.edu/policy/benchmarks/2006Benchmarks.pdf
W. K. Kellogg Foundation One Michigan Ave. East Battle Creek, MI 49017 269.968.1611 www.wkkf.org	The Kellogg Foundation's emphasis on education focuses on improving education students, especially those most in risk of poor academic achievement. The foundation's integrating principles are learning, community, systems change, partnerships,	**Initiatives:** **ENLACE:** This project is a multiyear initiative to strengthen the educational pipeline and increase opportunities for Latinos to enter and complete college. **New Options for Youth:** The New Options Initiative will work outside of the current employment and education system to seek out, strengthen, and partner with innovative community-based organizations, businesses, education institutions, and municipal governments. **Youth and Education General Grantmaking:** This initiative supports new ideas about how to engage children and youth in learning and new ways to bring together community-based systems

Organization	Organization Information and Focus	Initiatives, Projects, Products and Links
	leadership and innovation.	that promote learning. **Publications:** *ENLACE Connection: What Makes a Difference in the Education of Latino U.S. Students: Learning from the Experience of 13 ENLACE Partnerships* (May 2007) http://www.wkkf.org/DesktopModules/WKF.00_DmaSupport/ViewDoc.aspx?LanguageID=0&CID=16&ListID=28&ItemID=5000364&fld=PDFFile *State Funding for Children: Spending in 2003 and How It Changed From Earlier Years* (April 2007) http://www.wkkf.org/DesktopModules/WKF.00_DmaSupport/ViewDoc.aspx?LanguageID=0&CID=168&ListID=28&ItemID=5000319&fld=PDFFile

Compiled by Michael Colasanti, researcher, ECS Information Clearinghouse

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 810 • Denver, CO 80203-3442 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

State P-16 and P-20 Council Considerations

By Jennifer Dounay

December 2008

The divergent state-level structures that govern and fund education in the states — and the similarly diverse challenges that states face — may call for different members, agendas and supports for state-level P-16 and P-20 councils. However, ECS research suggests that some indicators associated with a council's actors, agenda and appropriation of resources are positively associated with a council's capacity to influence or implement meaningful education reform.

This worksheet is intended to help you evaluate whether your state's P-16 or P-20 council is aligned with some of these indicators.

Actors

Does your state's P-16 or P-20 council:

_____ Include at least one explicit representative of early learning?

_____ Include a representative of the governor's office?

_____ Include legislators — from majority and minority leadership positions?

_____ Require primarily members (rather than members' designees) to attend meetings?

_____ Embrace the participation of but set limits on the number of members who do not have authority to call for or implement change in state-level governing bodies and agencies?

_____ Balance the number of P-12 vs. postsecondary representatives, and the number of education vs. "other" representatives?

_____ Have a vision or mission statement that makes clear the council's purpose as well as the respective roles and responsibilities of members from different stakeholder groups (i.e., legislators, K-12 and postsecondary leaders, business and community leaders, etc.)?

_____ Meet at least quarterly?

Agenda

Does your state's P-16 or P-20 council agenda:

_____ Have more than five areas of activity? (Exceptions may be made where councils have achieved traction on earlier reform efforts.)

_____ Represent areas that pose clear challenges to student success yet appear "solvable"?

_____ Represent work that individual entities or agencies (i.e., K-12, postsecondary) would be unable to adequately address in isolation from other state-level entities or agencies?

_____ Address areas of weakness identified through a K-16 or P-16 longitudinal data system, or another data system that tracks high school to postsecondary transitions?

_____ Reflect state-level goals (set by the council or another state-level entity) that are statistical in nature and hinge on the collection of reliable data (i.e., “decrease the public postsecondary remediation rate in mathematics by 15% by 2015”)?

_____ Include a “balanced scorecard” that identifies annual or biennial incremental goals related to key components of the council agenda, and identify council members or agency staff members responsible for addressing those goals?

_____ Reflect “accountability” for council members themselves (i.e., members will identify obsolete or duplicative efforts, and/or create incentives for interagency collaboration, etc.)?

Appropriation of resources

Does your state’s P-16 or P-20 council:

_____ Receive support from at least a .5 full-time equivalent (FTE) dedicated staff member?

_____ Receive support from a legislative appropriation or funds built into the budgets of participating state-level entities?

_____ Receive support — either financial or in-kind — from external sources of funding, such as state and local education and business groups, foundations, federal grants, etc.?

Jennifer Dounay, project manager for ECS’ High School Policy Center, may be reached at 303.299.3689 or jdounay@ecs.org

Policy Brief

At-Risk

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 810 • Denver, CO 80203-3442 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Beyond the GED: State Strategies to Help Former Dropouts Earn a High School Diploma

By Jennifer Dounay

August 2008

Bored in his high school classes, "Jeffrey" had mentally checked out of high school long before he stopped going to class at age 15. After four years working at low-wage jobs and unable to make ends meet, he realized he wanted to earn a high school diploma and go to college. But at 19, Jeffrey would feel awkward sitting in high school classes, surrounded by kids much younger than him. And why would he want to go back to his local high school, where none of the teachers had seemed to care about him, and courses seemed completely unrelated to the real world? Not to mention the fact that his work schedule would make it impossible to attend a full schedule of classes during the regular school day. Besides, quitting his job was not an option. Jeffrey felt stuck.

Jeffrey is not alone. Seventy-four percent of the high school dropouts age 16-25 surveyed for a 2006 report said that, if they could do it all over again, they would have stayed in school. Seventy-six percent of the survey respondents said that if they could, they would definitely or probably enroll in a high school program for people their age. The authors add, "At the time of their decision to leave high school, fifty-three percent [of the dropouts in the survey] had planned to go back and graduate. Since that time, however, only 11 percent have actually gone back and graduated."[1]

And the situation is particularly serious, considering the low graduation rates in many states and communities, combined with the educational, economic and employment challenges that high school dropouts face. As Adria Steinberg and Cheryl Almeida point out in a 2004 report:

> Since the 1970s, wages of high school dropouts have fallen further and further behind those of high school graduates and, particularly, those with college credentials. Young people who exit the educational pipeline in high school are much less likely than their peers to attain valuable postsecondary credentials, even if they eventually obtain a GED. While many more GED recipients (30 percent) than dropouts (8 percent) obtain some postsecondary credits, less than 2 percent of GED holders compared to 36 percent of high school graduates complete four or more years of postsecondary education. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that 60 percent of jobs created between now and 2010 will require at least some postsecondary education. In the emerging economy, a high school dropout or a young person who earns a GED but no further postsecondary credential has extremely few opportunities for a family-supporting career.[2]

Clearly, options are needed to help young adults earn a high school diploma.

While many programs to help young dropouts earn a high school diploma are local initiatives launched by forward-thinking districts and community-based organizations, few states have launched larger-scale efforts to help young people reenter the education system. This policy brief provides information on various state policy components that can facilitate former dropouts' ability to earn a high school diploma:

- Increasing the upper statutory age
- Offering flexible means to accelerate learning and demonstrate course competencies

- Providing flexible (not less rigorous) credit recovery options
- Offering flexibility in course scheduling and courseloads
- Making clear connections to postsecondary education and/or the workforce
- Communicating the availability of options for dropouts to earn a high school diploma.

This policy brief also addresses finance elements state policymakers must consider when developing new education options.

Increasing the upper statutory age

Why it's important: State education funding is generally tied to student age. Therefore, districts serving students who are older than the state-set upper statutory age are not eligible to receive state funds for those students. This creates a disincentive for districts and schools to serve older students, particularly during tight fiscal situations. Recognizing this fact, 31 states set the upper statutory age at 21, and nine states set it at 20.[3]

Highlights: Texas legislation enacted in 2007 authorizes districts to admit resident students up to age 26 who wish to earn a high school diploma. A student older than 21 who has not attended school in the last three years must have separate classrooms from high school students age 18 and younger.[4]

Offering flexible means to accelerate learning and demonstrate course competencies

Why it's important: Many dropouts were poorly served by the traditional textbook-and-blackboard class structure. They are also more likely to have work or parenting obligations that prevent them from attending class on a regular schedule. Offering accelerated learning or the ability to demonstrate course competency provides students with an alternative route to gaining enough credits to earn a high school diploma.

Highlights: Some states have met this need by establishing state policies that offer returning dropouts the opportunity to complete required credits by demonstrating proficiency in required knowledge and skills.

Texas legislation passed in 2007 authorizes students with attendance rates between 75% and 90% to earn course credit if the student completes a plan (approved by the principal) that provides for the student to meet the class instructional requirements.[5] Furthermore, an increasing number of states allow students to circumvent seat-time course requirements by demonstrating proficiency in the course content. (For more details, see the "Proficiency-based credit" section of the ECS graduation requirements database.)

While some states' proficiency-based credit options were adopted long ago to accommodate gifted students, more recent state policies make clear that such options must be made available to at-risk or returning dropout students. To better serve at-risk students and returning dropouts, **Louisiana** repealed an earlier provision in 2007 that barred students from taking a proficiency test to earn credit for a course they had previously failed.[6]

Ohio students entering grade 9 in the 2010-2011 school year will be required to complete the rigorous Ohio core curriculum. Students age 16-21 may enroll in a "dropout prevention and recovery program" to allow students to complete a competency-based instructional program instead of the Ohio core curriculum. Eligible students must be "at least one grade level behind their cohort age groups or experience crises that significantly interfere with their academic progress such that they are prevented from continuing their traditional programs." Programs must indicate how the state content standards will be taught and assessed (and these means must be approved by the state department of education). Participating students must still pass the Ohio graduation tests.[7]

Providing flexible (not less rigorous) credit recovery options

Why it's important: Returning dropouts are best served when they can use flexible, alternative means to acquire knowledge and skills they struggled with in the traditional classroom setting.

Highlights: Emerging state approaches include strategies such as are developing options to allow returning dropouts to catch up on just the skills and knowledge they lack, or providing online and other methods that allow for flexible scheduling, but still require demonstration of mastery of state-level standards.

An **Alabama** state board rule authorizes districts to develop credit recovery programs to provide students with opportunities to master concepts and skills in one or more failed courses. The rule requires course content for credit recovery courses to be composed of standards in which students proved deficient rather than all standards of the original course, and allows these courses to be provided via computer software, online instruction, or teacher-directed instruction. However, this does not set a lower standard for earning graduation credit — the curriculum of credit recovery courses must align with the state board content standards in which students are deficient.[8]

Louisiana specifies that any credit recovery course districts choose to offer must be "self-paced and competency-based," and that districts cannot impose attendance requirements on participating students in such courses as long as the attendance requirement was met when the student first failed the course. Like Alabama, Louisiana requires credit recovery courses to be aligned with the state's content standards and grade-level expectations. Students in a credit recovery course may earn Carnegie units either by (1) completing the course requirements for a computer-based credit recovery program approved by the state department of education, or (2) passing a department-approved exam, which may be a state-approved end-of-course exam or a locally-developed final exam approved by the state department of education.[9]

One of the stated purposes of the **Kentucky**, **North Carolina** and **South Carolina** virtual high school programs is to offer credit recovery options.[10]

Caveat: Time should be the variable (less time as well as more). Standards and high expectations should be the same for all students, regardless of whether they're following an alternative route or traditional path to high school graduation.

Offering flexibility in course scheduling and courseloads

Why it's important: The regular 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. school day can make returning to school a challenge for returning dropouts who have jobs or young children. Therefore, offering flexible course scheduling and course loads provides non-traditional students more opportunities to earn a high school diploma.

Highlights: State approaches include such strategies as allowing students to take courses at unconventional hours — during evenings, weekends, summers, and vacation sessions — and allowing for attendance either in brick-and-mortar classrooms or online.

Texas legislation allows a district to apply to the state to offer a flexible school day program for students who have dropped out of high school. An approved district may offer flexibility in the number of hours in the school day or in the number of days in the school week, or may allow students to enroll in less or more than a full course load. In calculating average daily attendance for students participating in a flexible school day program, the state department of education must "allow accumulations of hours of instruction for students whose schedule would not otherwise allow full state funding." Funding must be prorated based on hours and/or days of instruction, including time spent in class during the summer or vacation session.[11]

Twenty-eight states have established statewide virtual high schools, which in most cases allow students to take courses outside the regular school day and school year. In 27 states, courses must be aligned with state standards.[12]

Making clear connections to postsecondary education and/or the workforce

Why it's important: Going to college and/or improving one's lot in the workforce can be prime motivators for dropouts to return to school. Some programs provide explicit guidance and support. Those offering postsecondary credit make clear that students are working toward a credential that matters. Those programs that provide training in technical skills in an area of student interest offer opportunities for graduates to apply for living-wage jobs with career potential. Workforce training additionally provides the "real-world" learning environments in which many at-risk students thrive. Dual enrollment programs situated on postsecondary campuses spare older returning students the embarrassment of taking courses on a high school campus and can be good exposure for students who are the first in their family to attend college.

Highlights: Some states have developed options allowing returning dropouts to earn a high school diploma on a postsecondary campus. In some cases, students may earn high school as well as college credit.

Indiana's Fast Track to College program offers young people the opportunity to earn a high school diploma while getting a leg up on earning a postsecondary degree. Programs at Ivy Tech Community College (which has campuses across the state) and Vincennes University (a multi-campus two-year public university that also awards baccalaureate degrees in seven areas) may allow students to complete credits toward an associate's degree or certification program. Programs also may be established at a public colleges and universities and offer credit toward a four-year degree. At all locations, eligible students must be either at least 19 years old and not enrolled in high school, or 17 years old and have permission from the high school most recently attended.

To complete diploma requirements, students must (1) pass the state exit exam, an approved exit exam equivalent, the GED exam or an exam that demonstrates the student is ready for college-level coursework (i.e., COMPASS, SAT, ACT); and (2) complete high school and postsecondary course requirements. The postsecondary institution awards the high school diploma, which notes that the recipient earned the diploma at the institution.

All postsecondary institutions offering Fast Track must report to the state's P-16 coordinating entity, the Education Roundtable, the number of program participants and diplomas granted.[13] However, the fact that many students 19 years old and older must bear the financial burden for tuition, fees, books, and other costs has proven an obstacle to greater Fast Track participation among adults.[14]

While not explicitly geared to serving returning dropouts, **Oregon** legislation on alternative education programs has led to the development of high-quality programs that allow students to earn their diploma, (along with postsecondary credits) on postsecondary campuses. Districts may run their own programs or contract with approved private alternative education providers. All programs must undergo evaluation at least annually. Evaluations of private alternative education programs must review whether programs are providing the opportunity for students "to make progress toward achieving state academic content and performance standards." [15]

Through this legislation, Portland Community College developed the Gateway to College program serving 16- to 20-year-old dropouts. Gateway to College is now available in 12 states. **Pennsylvania** statute makes clear that for purposes of reimbursing districts and postsecondary institutions, "Gateway to College" programs are considered concurrent enrollment programs.[16]

A **Louisiana** pilot program focuses on offering students age 16-21 access to technical training. Legislation enacted in 2006 establishes a pilot encouraging high schools and community or technical colleges to forge partnerships allowing students to earn Carnegie units toward graduation and articulated postsecondary technical college credit. By the 2010-2011 school year "or as soon as funding is made available," the state aims to make the program available to any eligible student.[17] The only drawback is that legislation specifies that eligible students (even

those over age 18) must be enrolled in a public high school. It is unlikely that dropouts will be eager to re-enroll in a traditional high school to access the program.

Regardless of program location, returning dropouts may need help setting a plan for future education and career goals. School staff are responsible for developing individual career plans for students in the **Ohio** dropout prevention and recovery program. These plans must specify that a student will ultimately enroll in a two-year postsecondary program, earn a business and industry credential, or enter an apprenticeship. The program must provide counseling and support based on the plan during the remainder of the student's high school experience.[18]

Getting the word out

Why it's important: In policy, it isn't always true that "If you build it, they will come." State policymakers should think about effective marketing and communications so that young people eligible for participation in dropout recovery programs are aware of such opportunities and the benefits of program completion.

Highlights: Some states, for example, require districts to notify students of the availability of high school programs for potential or returning dropouts.

When a student's attendance pattern is so erratic that the student is not benefiting from the educational program, **Oregon** districts are required to notify students and parents of the availability of alternative education programs. The notification must specify a program recommended for the student based on student's learning styles, and needs and procedures for enrolling the student in that program. Districts must also ensure that parents speaking a language other than English receive the notification in a language they can understand.[19]

Thinking differently about schools = thinking differently about funding

Why it's important: New education programs, especially those run outside of traditional school districts, may require adjustments in the way that states distribute their funding. In certain cases, the funding system may require only a tweak, while in others, a major revision in funding might be necessary. It is important for state policymakers to make sure that before any new education program is implemented, appropriate changes to the state funding system have been made.

Highlights: School finance policies in some states take into account the flexible scheduling and structure of programs serving returning dropouts.

Contractors who provide approved alternative education programs in **Oregon** receive either the full cost of educating a student or 80% of the school district's average cost of educating a student, whichever is less. Administrative rule allows funding to support activities such as tutorials, small and large group instruction, personal growth and development instruction, cooperative work experience, supervised work experience and other activities provided by any accredited institutions.[20]

Jennifer Dounay, project manager for ECS' High School Policy Center, can be reached at 303.299.3689 or jdounay@ecs.org

[1] John M. Bridgeland, John J. DiIulio, Jr., Karen Burke Morison, *The Silent Epidemic: Perspectives of High School Dropouts.* [report online] (Washington, D.C.: Civic Enterprises, LLC, 2006, accessed 6 August 2008); available from Civic Enterprises: http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/thesilentepidemic3-06final.pdf; Internet.
[2] Adria Steinberg and Cheryl Almeida, *The Dropout Crisis: Promising Approaches in Prevention and Recovery.* [report online] (Boston: Jobs for the Future, 2004, accessed 8 August 2008); available from JFF: http://www.jff.org/Documents/dropoutcrisis.pdf; Internet.
[3] ECS database, "Student Accountability Initiatives: Upper Statutory Age," last updated July 30, 2007, accessed 27 August 2008: http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=1635
[4] TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 25.001
[5] TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 25.092
[6] LA. ADMIN. CODE tit. 28, § 2323
[7] OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3313.603(F)
[8] ALA. ADMIN. CODE R. 2903-1-.02
[9] LA. ADMIN. CODE tit. 28, § 2324
[10] ECS database, "Virtual High Schools: Does the Virtual High School Have a Specific Focus?," last updated December 3, 2007; accessed 20 August 2008: http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=1384
[11] TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 29.0822
[12] ECS database, "Virtual High Schools," last updated December 3, 2007; accessed 20 August 2008: http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=1781
[13] IND. CODE ANN. § 21-43-6-1 through -6, 21-43-7-1 through -6, 21-43-8-1 through -6
[14] Cyndi Stout, Ivy Tech Community College – Central Indiana, personal communication
[15] OR. REV. STAT. § 336.615 through 336.675
[16] 24 PA. CONS. STAT. § 16-1602-B
[17] LA REV. STAT. ANN. § 17:187.1 through 187.5
[18] OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3313.603(F)
[19] OR. REV. STAT. § 336.645; OR. ADMIN. R. 581-021-0071
[20] OR. REV. STAT. § 336.635; OR. ADMIN. R. 581-023-0008

StateNotes
State Policymaking

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 810 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Education-Related Ballot Questions: 2008

By Kyle Zinth

November 2008

Introduction

2008 saw voters in 15 states weigh in on a variety of issues pertaining to state-level education policy.

Selected Highlights

Finance:
State funding for education: 13 states

Alabama voters decided to reestablish the state's rainy day education account, while voters in **Montana** and **New Mexico** approved additional funding for higher education. Raising revenue for education through various forms of gambling was decided on in five states; Voters in **Arkansas**, **Colorado**, **Maryland** and **Missouri** approved these measures, **Maine** voters did not. **Oregon** voters rejected a measure that would have changed the way lottery funds are distributed between education and public safety programs.

Other Issues:
Voters in **Oregon** rejected measures that would have required that teacher raises be based on classroom performance instead of seniority, and limited the amount of time non-English speaking students could be taught in a language other than English. Voters in **Louisiana** have chosen to impose term limits on state boards and commissions, many of which pertain to education.

Listed questions include enacted legislation being presented to the public for approval and initiatives placed on the ballot through the petition process. Following the summary table below are brief profiles of each question along with links to text when available.

Additions and corrections are welcome.

Summary Table

State	Issue	Status
Alabama	Expands the Education Trust Rainy Day Account	**Approved by voters**
Arkansas	Authorizes lotteries to fund scholarships and grants	**Approved by voters**
California	Community College Governance, Funding Stabilization, and Student Fee Reduction Act	**Rejected by voters**
Colorado	Distributes gaming tax revenue for student financial aid and classroom instruction at community colleges	**Approved by voters**

State	Issue	Status
	Requires severance tax revenues to be credited to a new trust fund for college scholarships	Rejected by voters
	Requires revenue that the state would otherwise be required to refund be transferred to the state education fund	Rejected by voters
	Prohibits discrimination or preferential treatment on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin in public education	Rejected by voters
Florida	Authorizes counties to levy a local option sales tax to supplement community college funding	Rejected by voters
Georgia	Authorizes local boards of education to use tax funds for redevelopment purposes and programs	Approved by voters
Louisiana	Establishes term limits for public boards and commissions	Approved by voters
Maine	Authorizes gambling revenues for education	Rejected by voters
Maryland	Authorizes gambling revenues for education	Approved by voters
Missouri	Authorizes gambling revenues for education	Approved by voters
Montana	Levies six mills for the support, maintenance, and improvement of the Montana university system	Approved by voters
Nebraska	Prohibits discrimination or preferential treatment on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin in public education	Approved by voters
New Mexico	Increases the size of school boards in school districts with a population greater than 200,000	Approved by voters
	Allows school elections at same time as nonpartisan elections	Approved by voters
	Approves $140.133 million bonds for higher education	Approved by voters
Oregon	Requires teacher raises based on classroom performance, not seniority	Rejected by voters
	Creates a new fund, which would changes way lottery proceeds are distributed between education and public safety programs	Rejected by voters
	Prohibits teaching non-English speaking public school students in a language that is not English for more than one to two years	Rejected by voters
South Carolina	Authorizes funds for teacher post-employment benefits to be invested in equity securities	Rejected by voters

State Profiles

Alabama

Statewide Amendment Number One
Proposes to expand the education trust fund rainy day account within the Alabama trust fund, and to establish the general fund rainy day account within the Alabama trust fund.
Status: Approved by voters (Unofficial)

Arkansas

Proposed Constitutional Amendment No. 3
Authorizes the general assembly to establish, operate and regulate state lotteries to fund scholarships and grants for Arkansas citizens enrolled in certified two-year and four-year colleges and universities in Arkansas.
Status: Approved by voters (Unofficial)

California

Proposition 92
The Community College Governance, Funding Stabilization and Student Fee Reduction Act would:

- Establish in state constitution a system of independent public community college districts and Board of Governors
- Requires minimum levels of state funding for school districts and community college districts to be calculated separately, using different criteria and separately appropriated
- Allocate 10.46% of current Proposition 98 school funding maintenance factor to community colleges
- Set community college fees at $15/unit per semester; limits future fee increases
- Provide formula for allocation by Legislature to community college districts that would not otherwise receive general fund revenues through community college apportionment.

Status: Rejected by Voters

Colorado

Amendment 46
Prohibits Colorado governments from discriminating against or granting preferential treatment to any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin in public employment, public education or public contracting. Makes exceptions for federal programs, existing court orders or other legally binding agreements and bona fide qualifications based on sex.
Status: Rejected by voters (Unofficial)

Amendment 50
Would authorize extension of casino hours of operation, addition of games and increase of maximum bet. Would adjust distributions to current gaming fund recipients for growth in gaming tax revenue due to voter-approved revisions in gaming; would distribute 78% of the remaining gaming tax revenue from this amendment for student financial aid and classroom instruction at community colleges according to the proportion of their respective student enrollments.
Status: Approved by voters (Unofficial)

Amendment 58
Would eliminate a credit against the severance tax on oil and gas for property taxes paid by oil and gas producers and interest owners; would reduce the level of production that qualifies wells for an exemption from the tax; would require the tax revenues to be credited to the severance tax trust fund, the local government severance tax fund, and a new trust fund for college scholarships, native wildlife habitat preservation, renewable energy and energy efficiency programs.
Status: Rejected by voters (Unofficial)

Amendment 59
Proposes an amendment to the Constitution concerning the manner in which the state funds public education from preschool through 12th grade for the 2010-11 state fiscal year and each state fiscal year thereafter, requiring that any revenue that the state would otherwise be required to refund pursuant to the constitutional limit on state fiscal year spending be transferred instead to the state education fund.
Status: Rejected by voters (Unofficial)

Florida

Local Option Community College Funding
Proposes amending the state constitution to require that the legislature authorize counties to levy a local option sales tax to supplement community college funding. Voter approval required to levy the tax. Approved taxes would sunset after five years and may be reauthorized by the voters.
Status: Rejected by voters (Unofficial)

Georgia

Amendment 2
Proposes to amend the state constitution to authorize community redevelopment and authorize counties, municipalities and local boards of education to use tax funds for redevelopment purposes and programs.
Status: Approved by voters (Unofficial)

Louisiana

Amendment One
Provides for term limits for members of the state boards of:

- Elementary and Secondary Education
- Regents
- Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System
- Supervisors of Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College
- Supervisors of Southern University and Agricultural and Mechanical College
- Supervisors of Community and Technical Colleges.

Provides that a person who has served for more than two and one-half terms in three consecutive terms may not be appointed or elected to the succeeding term. Provides for a limit on service on more than one such board or commission. (Also pertains to additional non-education related boards and commissions.)
Status: Approved by voters (Unofficial)

Maine

Question 3
Would authorize the establishment of a casino in Oxford County, with revenue from related taxes being distributed among various state programs and entities, including:

- A Maine resident student loan repayment fund or similarly established fund
- The University of Maine
- A Maine prepaid college plan
- The Maine Community College System
- Local schools
- The Finance Authority of Maine for its NextGen First Step Grant program to assist residents in saving for college tuition.

Status: Rejected by voters (Unofficial)

Maryland

Question 2
Authorizes state to issue up to five video lottery licenses for the primary purpose of raising revenue for education of children in public schools, pre-kindergarten through grade 12, public school construction and improvements, and construction of capital projects at community colleges and higher education institutions.

Status: Approved (Unofficial)

Missouri

Proposition A
Would amend various aspects of state laws relating to gambling, including creating a new specific education fund. Gambling tax proceeds generated as a result of this measure would flow into the Schools First Elementary and Secondary Education Improvement Fund.
Status: Approved by voters (Unofficial)

Montana

LR-118
Levies upon the taxable value of all real estate and personal property subject to taxation six mills for the support, maintenance and improvement of the Montana university system. The funds raised from the levy must be deposited in the state special revenue fund.
Status: Approved by voters (Unofficial)

Nebraska

Measure 424
Prohibits the state from discriminating against, or granting preferential treatment to any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in public employment, public education or public contracting.
Status: Approved by voters (Unofficial)

New Mexico

Amendment 2
Amends constitution to increase the size of certain school boards to nine members and conduct the election by mail-in ballot or as otherwise provided by law.
Status: Approved by voters (Unofficial)

Amendment 4
Amends constitution to allow school elections to be held at the same time as non-partisan elections.
Status: Approved by voters (Unofficial)

Bond Question D
Authorizes the issuance and sale of higher educational and special schools capital improvement and acquisition bonds in an amount not to exceed $140,133,000.
Status: Approved by voters (Unofficial)

Oregon

Measure 60
Prohibits giving pay raises to a public school teacher based on seniority, requiring that pay raises be based on the teacher's classroom performance. Directs school districts that are laying off teachers to keep the teachers who are most qualified to teach specific subjects.
Status: Rejected by voters (Unofficial)

Measure 62
Amends the Constitution to create a new public safety fund, which would receive 15% of lottery proceeds for law enforcement and related programs, including grants to counties to fund early childhood programs for children who are at risk.
Status: Rejected by voters (Unofficial)

Measure 58

Prohibits teaching non-English speaking public school students in a language that is not English for more than one to two years.
Status: Rejected by voters (Unofficial)

South Carolina

Amendment 2
Amends constitution to provide that the funds of any trust fund established by law for the funding of post-employment benefits for state employees and public school teachers may be invested and reinvested in equity securities subject to the same limitations on such investments applicable for the funds of the various state-operated retirement systems.
Status: Rejected by voters (Unofficial)

Sources

- Project Vote Smart: http://www.vote-smart.org/index.htm
- Ballotpedia: http://ballotpedia.org/wiki/index.php/Education_initiatives
- Initiative and Referendum Institute: http://www.iandrinstitute.org/BW%202008-1%20Preview%20(v4%2010-24).pdf
- State Secretary of State Web sites
- ECS State Policy Database: http://www.ecs.org/ecs/ecscat.nsf/WebTopicView?OpenView&count=300&RestrictToCategory=State--Ballot+Initiatives

Kyle Zinth, policy analyst in the ECS Information Clearinghouse, compiled this report. E-mail: kzinth@ecs.org

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

StateNotes

Teacher Certification and Licensure / Testing Requirements

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

By Angela Baber

January 2008

(Information gathered August, 2007)

State Testing and Assessment Requirements for Initial and Continuing General Education Teachers

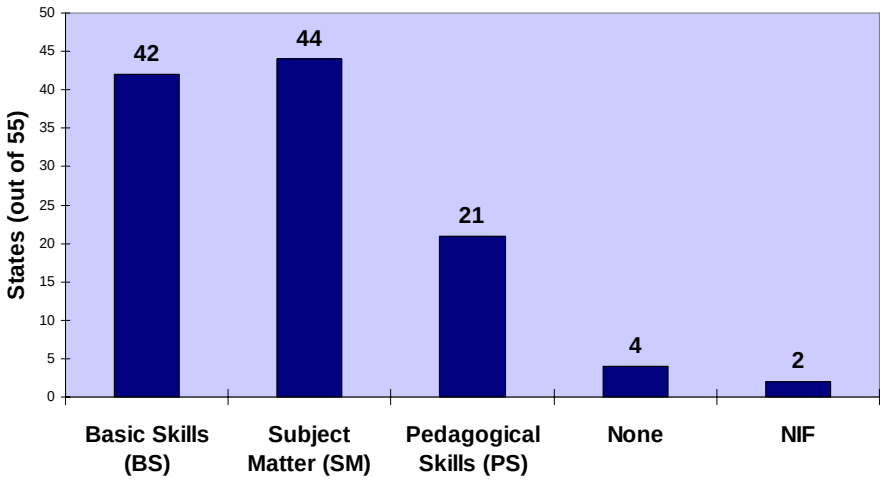
There are multiple requirements for teachers to become and remain certified and/or licensed to teach, including different types of tests and assessments. Passing one or more exams is a common requirement for initial teacher licensure. Assessment requirements vary across states from the type of tests administered to the required passing score(s). This StateNote reports on the types of assessments each state requires for initial and continuing teacher certification and licensure only, and is not intended to advocate for the use of teacher assessments in determining teacher quality. State passing scores for applicable exams are reported across states when available. The data collected cover in-state traditional certification and licensure testing requirements for general education teachers. Requirements for all 50 states, the District of Columbia and four U.S. Territories are represented.

For more information on state policy regarding teacher certification and licensure visit the ECS Teacher Certification and Licensure 50-State Database (http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/reportTQ.aspx?id=1137).

Initial Teacher Certification and Licensure Examination Requirements

The following table illustrates the number of states that require basic skills assessments, subject matter assessments and pedagogical assessments for initial teacher certification and licensure.

State Examination Requirements for Initial Teacher Certification/Licensure



Basic Skills

The timing of testing requirements varies by state. Basic skills assessments can be a requirement for entry into or graduation from teacher preparation programs in some states, while in other states it is simply a requirement for certification. Forty-two states require basic skills examinations for initial teacher licensure. Fourteen of those states require this type of assessment as a preparation program requirement and the remaining as a certification requirement.

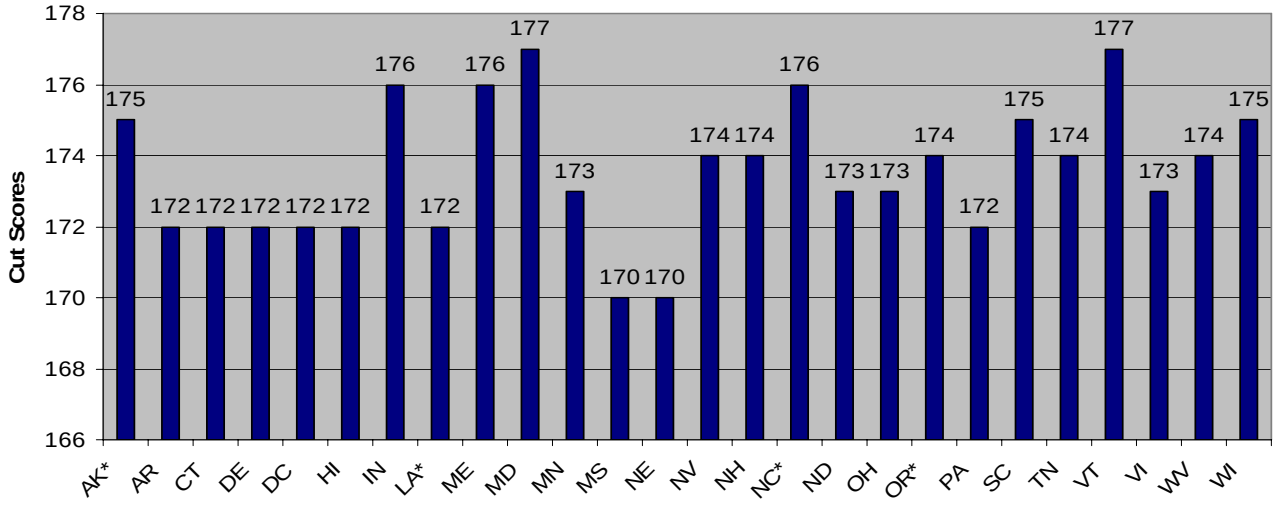
Teacher examinations may be designed and administered by organizations such as the Educational Testing Services (ETS) and National Evaluation System (NES), or by individual states. For their basic skills assessment 23 states (42%) use the Praxis I Basic Skills Assessment, nine states (16%) use the NES Basic Skills Assessment, four states (7%) use their own state designed assessments, two (4%) states use other types of assessments and five states (9%) use combinations of assessments. Of these states, three states offer Praxis I as one possibility for meeting basic skill assessment requirements. Eleven of the remaining states (20%) do not require any basic skills assessment for initial licensure (no information was found for American Samoa or Guam). The ETS Praxis I Basic Skills series includes reading, writing and math assessments[1].

Praxis I Passing Scores

States set state-specific passing scores, or cut scores, for basic skills examinations. NES state-designed assessments are unique and cut scores cannot be compared across states. ETS Praxis Series exams do not vary, however, and passing scores for Praxis exams can be compared across states. As mentioned above, 23 states require the Praxis I series and three states – Alaska, Louisiana and Oregon – offer Praxis I as one possibility for meeting basic skill assessment requirements.[2]

There are discrepancies between state passing score requirements. For the reading portion of the Praxis I Basic Skills Assessment, the passing scores range from a low of 170 to a high of 177 – a span of seven points with a mean passing score of 174. In writing, scores range from 171-175 with 172 as the mean. Math passing scores show the greatest contrast across states ranging from passing scores of 169-177 – a span of eight points and a mean of 172 points. The following charts represent state passing scores for all three portions of the Praxis I Basic Skills Assessment series.

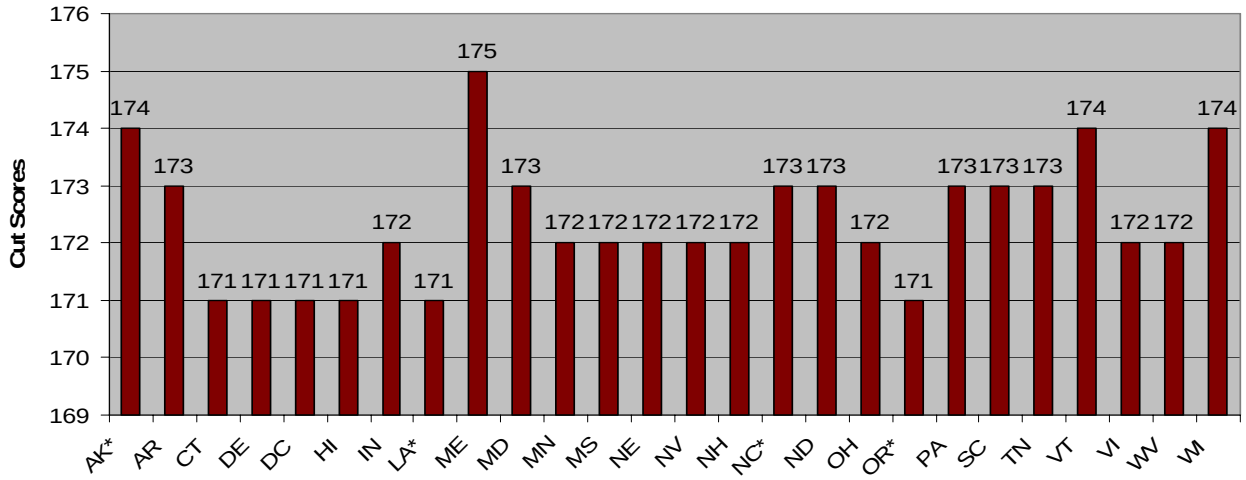
State Cut Scores for Praxis I Basic Skills Assessment in Reading



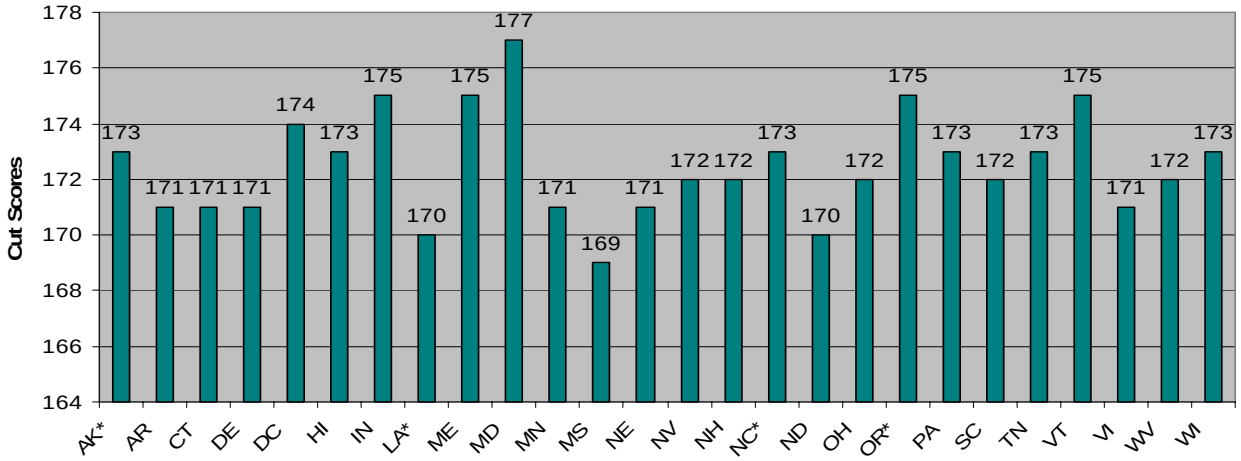
[1] Paper- and computer-based versions exist. Few differences were found between the passing scores for paper vs. computer-based exams, thus the following data is based on the paper version of the exam, but is a good representation of both versions.

[2] These three states are indicated by an asterisk (*) in the following charts.

State Cut Scores for Praxis I Basic Skills Assessment in Writing



State Cut Scores for Praxis I Basic Skills Assessment in Math



Subject Matter

In order to meet content proficiency requirements, 31 states (56%) require the Praxis II Subject Matter Assessment, nine states (16%) require a NES assessment, two states (4%) have state designed assessments, one state requires another state's assessment, one state offers multiple assessment options and nine states (15%) do not require any type of subject matter assessment for initial licensure (no information was found for Guam or American Samoa). Praxis II exam content is consistent across the states; however, the vast number of subject- and grade-level requirements complicates multiple-state comparisons and therefore no comparison of cut scores for Praxis II Subject Matter Assessments is included within this State Note.

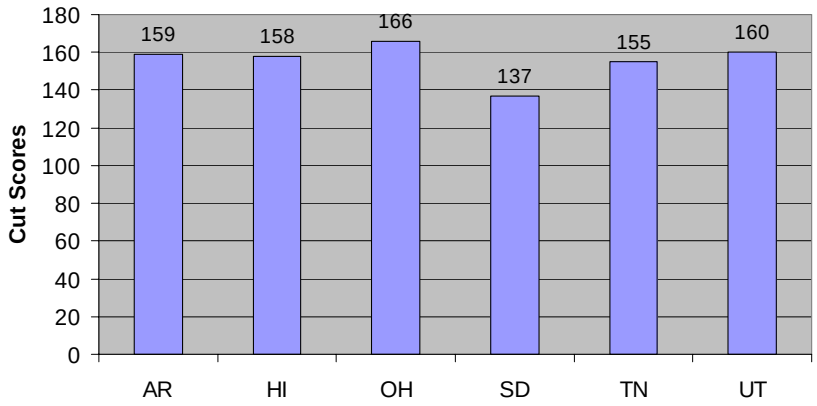
Pedagogical Skills

Thirty-one states (58%) do not require a pedagogical assessment for initial teacher licensure. Fifteen states (27%) require the Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) pedagogical assessment at one or more levels (Pre-K, Elementary, Middle, Secondary), four states (7%) require a state NES pedagogical assessment, one state requires a state designed assessment and a single state requires some other type of assessment (no information was found for American Samoa, Guam or Puerto Rico).

Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching Passing Scores

Of the 21 states that require some sort of pedagogical exam for initial teacher licensure, 15 states require the Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching exam. That means that of the 38% of states that require this type of assessment, the vast majority – 71% – use the Praxis II exam(s). The Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) exam is geared toward one of the four following levels: Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle and Secondary. The following tables illustrate which states use which level(s) of the Praxis II pedagogical exam. State designated cut scores for these exams have also been recorded.

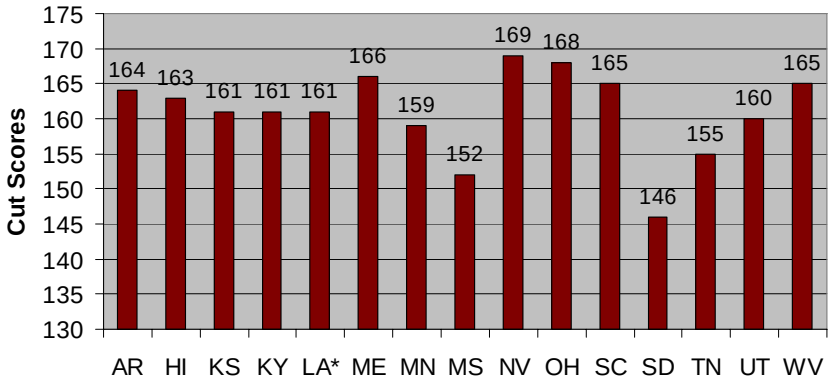
Early Childhood Teachers:
Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching Exam



Six states require the Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching exam for initial teacher certification for early childhood teachers.

Passing scores range from 137-166 with a mean score of 156. The difference between the lowest and highest score requirements is 29 points.

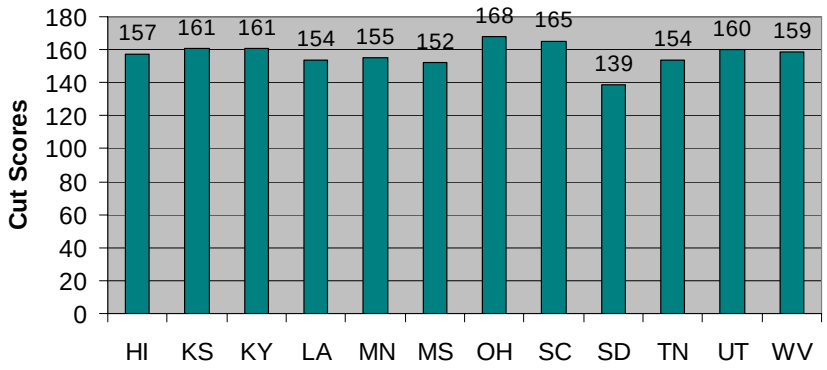
Elementary-Level Teachers:
Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching Exam



Fifteen states require the Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching exam for initial teacher certification Elementary-Level teachers.

Passing scores range from 146-169 with a mean score of 161. The difference between the lowest and highest score requirements is 23 points.

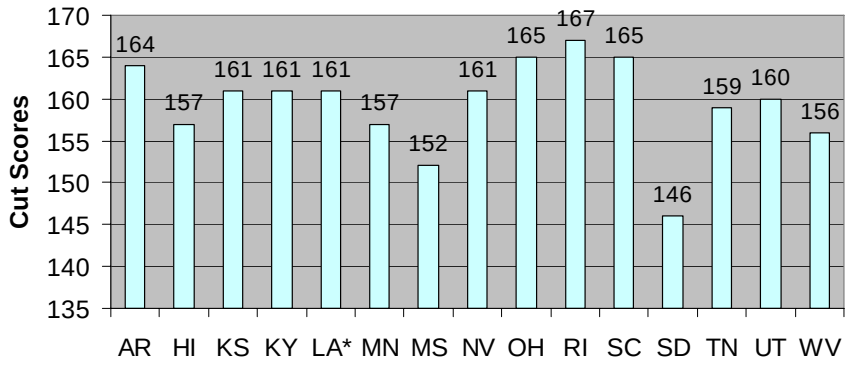
Middle-Level Teachers:
Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching Exam



Twelve states require the Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching exam for initial teacher certification Middle-Level teachers.

Passing scores range from 139-168 with a mean score of 157. The difference between the lowest and highest score requirements is 29 points.

Secondary-Level Teachers:
Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching Exam



Fifteen states require the Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching exam for initial teacher certification Secondary-Level teachers.

Passing scores range from 146 -167 with a mean score of 159. The difference between the lowest and highest score requirements is 21 points.

Continuing Teacher Certification and Licensure Requirements

State	Subject	Pedagogy	Performance
AK	Praxis II		
AZ			NES
AR			PraxisIII
CT		State	
FL		State	
GA		NES	
KY*	Praxis II (Elementary)	Praxis II (Secondary)	
LA			State
NY			NES
OH			PraxisIII
SC			State
UT		Praxis II (Secondary)	

At least twelve states require an assessment for continuing certification and licensure. In addition to the subject and pedagogy assessments, performance assessments are used by states as a way to determine a teacher's eligibility to progress to a more advanced licensure level. This table illustrates two states requiring subject matter assessments, five states requiring pedagogical assessments and six states requiring performance assessments as a condition to progress or continue as a teacher.

*Requirement(s) dependent on grade(s) taught.

State Testing and Assessment Requirements for Initial and Continuing General Education Teachers

State Testing Information and Resources

The following link provides access to a table including detailed state testing information, source information and links to relevant resources for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands collected in August 2007. No information was found for American Samoa or Guam.

http://www.ecs.org/html/docs/StateCLAssessmentTable.pdf

Angela Baber is a researcher for the Teaching Quality and Leadership Institute, at the Education Commission of the States.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy