Marc Tucker to receive 2014 ECS James Bryant Conant Award

DENVER – The Education Commission of the States is proud to announce Marc Tucker as the 2014 recipient of the James Bryant Conant Award, one of the most prestigious honors in the education community. ECS Chair and Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval will present the award to Tucker on Tuesday, July 1, at the ECS National Forum on Education Policy in Washington, D.C.

The Conant Award, named for the co-founder of ECS and former president of Harvard University, recognizes outstanding individual contributions to American education. Tucker joins an esteemed list of past recipients, including Thurgood Marshall, E.D. Hirsch, Fred (Mr.) Rogers and Lamar Alexander.

Tucker is the founder, president and CEO of the National Center on Education and the Economy and has spearheaded some of the most important education reforms of the past 25 years. His considerable influence on education reaches back to the 1970s, when he served in the National Institute of Education as director of the nation’s research on education policy.

“Marc Tucker has been at the forefront of many key education initiatives and his leadership has been instrumental in major reforms throughout the education sector,” said ECS President Jeremy Anderson. “From his formation of NCEE to his continued public service, Marc continues to leave a tremendous impact on education in America and is an extremely deserving recipient of the Conant Award.”

Over the course of his distinguished career, Tucker organized the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, where he wrote the influential report A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century. The report led to the creation of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. He was the Board’s first president. Tucker has long argued that the United States will not have a world-class education system until teaching attracts top high school graduates and becomes a high-status profession.

In 1988, Tucker established NCEE and created the New Standards project, a precursor to the Common Core State Standards. Later, he directed the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, whose recommendations shaped national education legislation in the 1990s. He has created many major school reform projects, including the National Institute for School Leadership and the Center on International Education Benchmarking, which researches the policies and practices of the countries with the most successful education systems.

“It is a great honor to join the company of the past recipients of this award,” Tucker said. “The challenge before our education system is to educate every child to a standard formerly thought necessary only for a small elite. This will require a transformation of our education system, a transformation that is well underway in the countries whose students outperform our own.”

With a lifetime of work dedicated to improving the lives of children and expanding educational opportunities for all students, Marc Tucker epitomizes the spirit of James Bryant Conant.

The Education Commission of the States was created by states, for states, in 1965. We track policy, translate research, provide unbiased advice and create opportunities for state policymakers to learn from one another.