



Governance

State Boards/Chiefs/Agencies

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Models of State Education Governance

By Todd Ziebarth

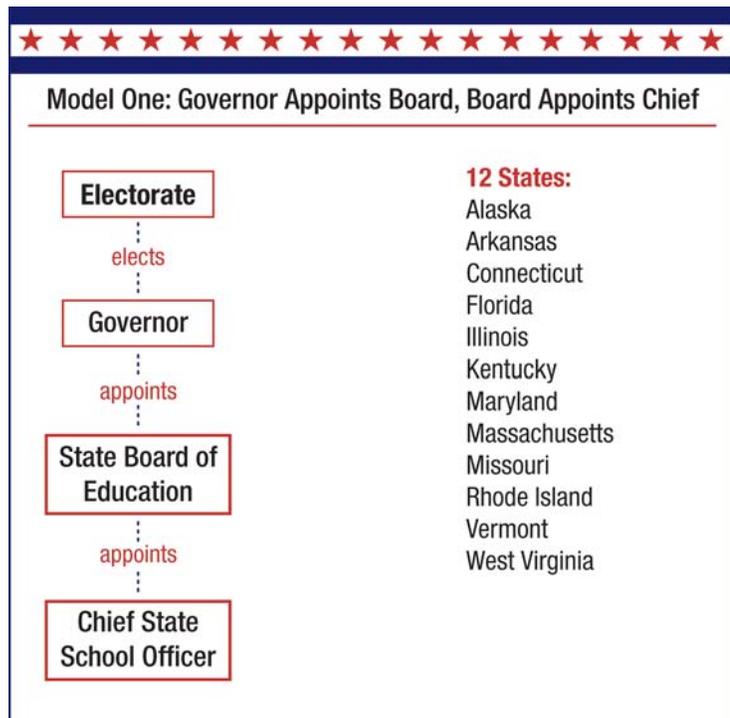
Updated by Alison Weems

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Education governance structures differ from state to state in ways that directly affect how state education policy leaders can act or interact. Understanding the differences between structures is important to understanding the entire education policy process. The governance structure of state boards of education can be categorized into one of four general models that describe how boards 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.

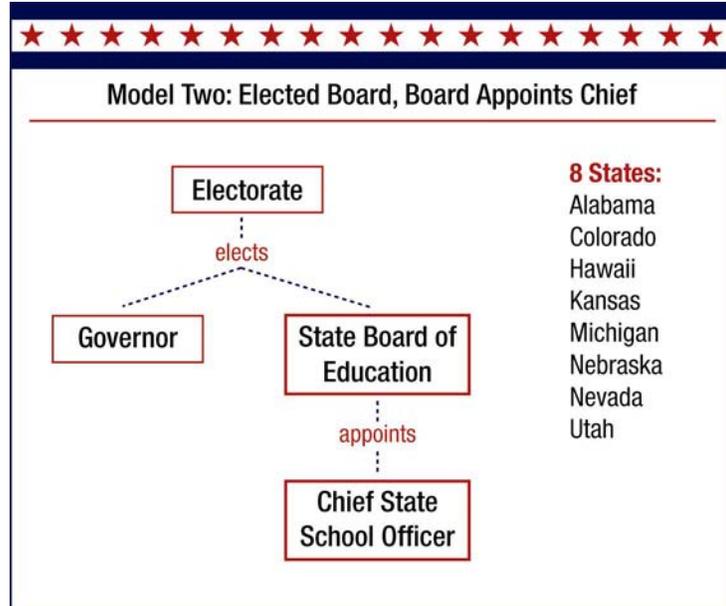
Model One

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. There are 12 Model One states: **Alaska, Arkansas, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Rhode Island, Vermont and West Virginia.**



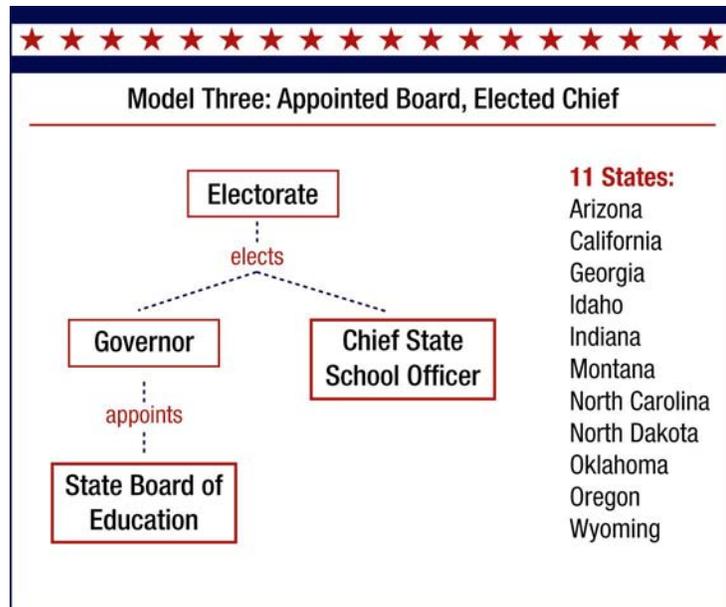
Model Two

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.**



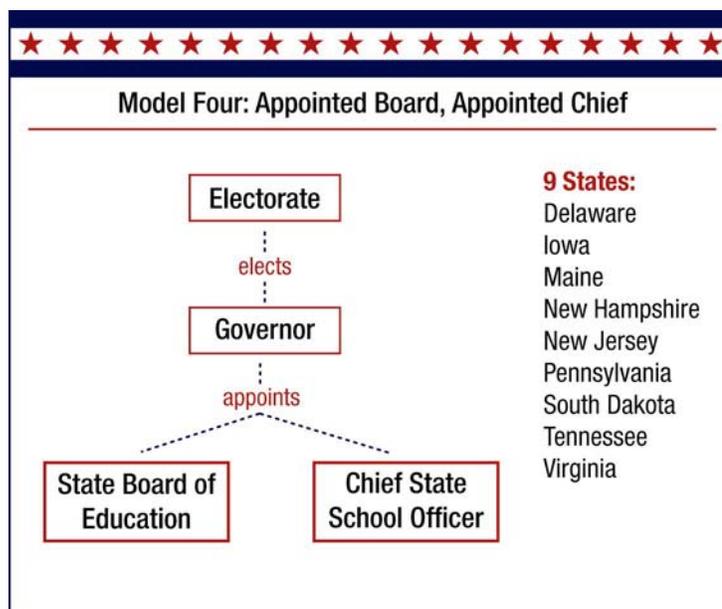
Model Three

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, as described below:

- A. Some state board members are elected and some are appointed by the governor/mayor. The state board appoints the chief state school officer. **Louisiana, Ohio** (governor appoints) **and the District of Columbia** (mayor appoints) use this model.
- B. The state legislature appoints the state board. Both **New York**, where the state board appoints the chief state school officer, and **South Carolina**, where the chief state school officer is elected and the governor appoints one additional member of the state board, follow this model.
- C. The governor, lieutenant governor and the speaker of the House appoint members to the state board. The state board appoints the chief state school officer. **Mississippi** is the only state using this model.
- D. 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. In the state of **Washington**, the state board 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.
- F. States with no state board of education are **Minnesota, Wisconsin** and **New Mexico** (although New Mexico has an elected Public Education Commission, it is advisory only). In **Minnesota**, the governor appoints the chief state school officer and in **Wisconsin**, the chief state school officer is elected. The governor of **New Mexico** appoints the chief state school officer who is advised by the elected Public Education Commission.

- G. **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 seven members appointed by the governor. The chief state school officer is the secretary of the board.

Governors' Cabinets with Education Representation

According to governors' Web sites, at least 23 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 23 states include: **California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia** and **West Virginia**.

Dual Offices for Education

Three states maintain a governance model that includes two authoritative positions for the state educational system:

- **Kentucky** has a Secretary of Education and a Commissioner of Education. (*KY. REV. STAT. ANN. §§156.147 to 156.250*)
- **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*)
- **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*)

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