DENVER, CO – Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius, 2006-08 Chair of the Education Commission of the States (ECS), is inviting all ECS constituents to participate in an online survey aimed at rethinking and reinvigorating the organization and its mission.

Recognizing that much has changed in the world of education policy since the founding of the organization in 1965, Governor Sebelius has, with the cooperation of the ECS Executive Committee, initiated a re-examination of the mission, goals and priorities of the organization. The online survey is one way the Governor and her team will gather ideas and suggestions from constituents.

“I’m committed to making this a very open, transparent process and one where all stakeholders and supporters of ECS can participate,” said Governor Sebelius. “Completing the online survey will help ECS leadership ensure we’re focused and well-positioned to play an important role as the nation moves forward in meeting the education needs of our society.”

The survey is based on results of discussions held by an ad hoc strategic planning committee, convened by Governor Sebelius on August 31st in Kansas City, as well as input from ECS staff, alumni, friends and supporters. Questions seek input on a draft mission statement, goals, priorities and roles for the organization.

Much is changing in the world of education policy today, and all education-based organizations need to evolve as well. This process of realigning the organization as the focus of education policy changes has been ongoing throughout the organization’s history. The survey is an effort to engage and listen to ECS’ key constituents, to enable the organization to continue to provide the valuable services that ECS offers in the most effective ways.

The idea of an interstate compact on education was put forth in the mid-1960s by James Bryant Conant, an educator, scientist and diplomat who had served as the president of Harvard University. Conant called for a mechanism for improving and strengthening education policy and policymaking at the state level. Such a mechanism, he said, would give voice to the diverse interests, needs and traditions of states; enable them to cooperate and communicate with one another; and promote their working together to focus national attention on the pressing education issues of the day.

The survey is available on the ECS Web site at http://www.ecs.org/html/mission/, and will be sent by e-mail to ECS’ key constituents. During the next month, ECS will collect and review the responses to the survey. By early November the ECS Executive Committee will meet to review these submissions and approve a final draft of the findings, which will then be presented to the ECS Steering Committee for its approval in Denver on December 11.

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) is a nationwide nonprofit organization created by the states, territories and the U.S. Congress that helps governors, legislators, state education officials and others identify, develop and implement public policies to improve student learning at all levels. A nonpartisan organization, ECS was formed in 1965 and is located in Denver, Colorado.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy