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ECS Releases New Paper on the Role of Community Colleges in Teacher Preparation

DENVER, CO – The Education Commission of the States (ECS) announces the release of Community Colleges and Teacher Preparation: Roles, Issues and Opportunities, an issue paper that explores the expanding and evolving role community colleges are playing in teacher preparation to help meet the ongoing demand for quality teachers.

The paper is the outcome of a meeting convened by ECS and the National Center for Teacher Transformation (NCTT) in August 2006, which brought together representatives from state higher education executive officers, community colleges, teacher preparation programs, teacher accreditation and K-12 education. Participants discussed the challenges, successes and opportunities available through full utilization of community colleges in collaboration with university systems and local education agencies.

The paper describes the forces shaping education policy and practice around teacher preparation; and offers suggestions on how community colleges can capitalize on their unique attributes to meet critical workforce demand in local and regional communities to positively impact the field of teacher education.

Highlighted recommendations from the report include:

♦ Teacher preparation should be viewed as a four-year process that includes content and pedagogical training throughout the four-years
♦ Program and course development should be a collaborative process including representation from universities, community colleges and the K-12 sector
♦ Each state department of education should encourage ongoing collaboration and communication among legislators, community colleges, universities and the K-12 sector on how community college teacher preparation can be used to improve the quality of teacher preparation and ameliorate teacher shortages
♦ Policymakers and institution leaders should consider providing resources to community colleges and K-12 school districts to support customized training for teachers through contracts and/or partnerships between community colleges and school districts.

Community Colleges and Teacher Preparation: Roles, Issues and Opportunities was produced through the generous support of the National Center for Teacher Transformation and is now available on the ECS Web site at: www.ecs.org/CCteacherprep.

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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